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SELECT POEMS.



# SELECT POEMS

BEING THE

LITERATURE PRESCRIBED FOR THE JUNIOR MATRICULATION AND JUNIOR LEAVING EXAMINATIONS,

1900.



EDITED WITH

*INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND AN APPENDIX*

BY

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## NOTE.

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A few words may be needed to explain the appearance in this volume of biographical and other notes on Coleridge. When the present edition was undertaken, Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* and *Youth and Age* were part of the work prescribed for Junior Matriculation and Junior Leaving for 1900. In May came the decision of the Senate of Toronto University to drop Coleridge. As the book was intended for use in other Provinces, as well as in Ontario, the publishers decided to include in the volume the Coleridge selections, together with the annotations which the editors had completed when the Senate's order was issued. The notes on Coleridge follow those on Longfellow and Wordsworth, but to prevent misunderstanding on the part of the Ontario student, the text of *The Ancient Mariner* and *Youth and Age* appears in the Appendix.





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*Rydal Vale.*  
(Neighborhood of Wordsworth's House at Rydal Mount.)

# INTRODUCTION.

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## I.—WHAT IS POETRY?

**The Scientific temper of our time.**—The temper of our time is essentially scientific. The discoveries of a host of investigators have not only passed into the popular mind, but changed its whole attitude. Where our fathers believed, we ask for cause or reason; for what they took on trust, we demand the why and the wherefore. There is nothing, we feel, which does not admit of explanation if investigation could only come at it. Exceptions may be pointed out which contradict accepted theories. Such cases necessitate the correction but not the abandonment of our idea of law. As Professor Caird has said: "Under the acknowledged reign of law the world is a connected drama, in which there is no place for episodes." To the men of science we owe a debt of gratitude for their contributions to greater clearness and sanity, for the suppression of many superstitions which impeded the progress of our predecessors, and for re-calling men from the pursuit of metaphysical Will-o'-the-wisps and theological Jack-o'-lanterns to the firm and certain path of experience.

**The apparent opposition of Science and Poetry.**—A lingering superstition which science, it would seem, is destined to extirpate, is the love of poetry. In his *Essay on Milton*, Macaulay says: "We think that as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. . . . In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They may be better able to analyze human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good ones—but little poetry."

A more recent writer—Max Nordau—in his book entitled *Degeneration*, speaks thus contemptuously of the prospect of art: "As to the future of art and literature, with which these inquiries are chiefly concerned, that can be predicted with tolerable clearness. I resist the temptation of looking into too remote a future. Otherwise I should



perhaps prove, or at least show as very probable, that in the mental life of centuries far ahead of us, art and poetry will occupy but a very insignificant place. Psychology teaches us that the course of development is from instinct to knowledge, from emotion to judgment, from rambling to regulated association of ideas. Attention replaces fugitive ideation; will, guided by reason, replaces caprice. Observation then triumphs ever more and more over imagination, and artistic symbolism, *i.e.*, the introduction of erroneous personal interpretations of the universe, is more and more driven back by an understanding of the laws of nature. On the other hand, the march hitherto followed by civilization gives us an idea of the fate which may be reserved for art and poetry in a very distant future. That which originally was the most important occupation of men of full mental development, of the maturest, best and wisest members of society, becomes little by little a subordinate pastime, and finally a child's amusement. Dancing was formerly an extremely important affair. It was performed on certain grand occasions as a state function of the first order, with solemn ceremonies, after sacrifices and invocations to the gods by the leading warriors of the tribe. To-day it is no more than a fleeting pastime for women and youths, and later on its last atavistic survival will be the dancing of children. The fable and the fairy tale were once the highest productions of the human mind. In them the most hidden wisdom of the tribe, and its most precious traditions, were expressed. To-day they represent a species of literature only cultivated for the nursery. The verse which by rhythm, figurative expression and rhyme treble betrays its origin in the stimulations of rhythmically functioning subordinate organs, in association of ideas working according to external similitudes, and in that working according to consonance, was originally the only form of literature. To-day it is only employed for purely emotional portrayal; for all other purposes it has been conquered by prose, and indeed has almost passed into the condition of an atavistic language. Under our very eyes the novel is being increasingly degraded, serious and highly cultivated men scarcely deeming it worthy of attention, and it appeals more and more exclusively to the young and to women. From all these examples it is fair to conclude that after some centuries, art and poetry will have become pure atavisms, and will no longer be cultivated except by the more emotional portion of humanity—by women, by the young, perhaps even by children."

It is true that at the present moment poetry seems extinct, but is this more than a temporary eclipse? Does it belong to the infancy of the



race? Is it an atavistic survival, an anachronism in our modern world? Must it be relegated to the nursery like the fable and the fairy tale and finally disappear like many another thing once beautiful, now antiquated and obsolescent? Has the kingdom of science come and the kingdom of imagination passed away? Will all color be merged in "the drab of the earnest, prosaic, practical, austere literary future?"

**Illustration of the difference between Science and Poetry.**—In *Literature and Dogma*, Matthew Arnold defines religion as "morality touched by emotion" and illustrates the distinction as follows: "'By the dispensation of Providence to mankind,' says Quintilian, 'goodness gives men most satisfaction.' That is morality. 'The path of the just is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' That is morality touched with emotion, or religion. 'Hold off from sensuality,' says Cicero, 'for if you have given yourself up to it, you will find yourself unable to think of anything else.' That is morality. 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' says Jesus Christ, 'for they shall see God.' That is religion. 'We all want to live honestly, but cannot,' says the Greek maxim-maker. That is morality. 'O wretched man, who shall deliver me from the body of this death,' says St. Paul. That is religion. 'Would thou wert of as good conversation in deed as in word' is morality. 'Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven' is religion. 'Live as you were meant to live' is morality. 'Lay hold of eternal life' is religion.

"Or we may take the contrast within the bounds of the Bible itself. 'Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty,' is morality; but 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work' is religion. Or we may even observe a third stage between these two stages, which shows to us the transition from the one to the other. 'If thou givest thy soul the desires that please her, she will make thee a laughing-stock to thine enemies.' That is morality. 'He that resisteth pleasure crowneth his life.' That is morality with the tone heightened, passing or trying to pass into religion. 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.' There the passage is made and we have religion."

Adopting Arnold's simple and effective method, we may define poetry as thought, science, touched by emotion, and illustrate the difference as follows:—

The geographer calls the earth an oblate spheroid. That is science. Wordsworth calls it "the mighty mother of mankind." That is poetry.

“The sum total of matter in the universe is a constant quantity,”  
is science.

The one remains, the many change and pass ;  
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly,

is poetry.

“The slightest displacement of matter on the surface of the earth involves, on the theory of gravitation, a readjustment of forces throughout the solar system,” is science.

There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest,  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins,

is poetry.

“The energy of the universe is a constant quantity,” is science.

Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,  
And the most ancient heavens  
Through thee are fresh and strong,

is poetry.

“Change of season, and, consequently, vegetation, are owing to the earth's annual movement about the sun, combined with her inclination to the plane of her orbit,” is science.

Flowers laugh before thee on their beds  
And fragrance in thy footing treads,

is poetry.

“The earth was originally cast forth from the sun, a glowing mass unfit for human or other habitation. Cooling down, it at length reached a condition when human beings could appear, developed from lower organisms. The cooling process is still going on and must ultimately make the planet again unfit for human beings. The race will then disappear, the earth itself will drop into the sun or be otherwise broken up, to be again cast forth and re-embodied in new forms.” That is prose.

And like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples and the great globe itself,  
Yea all which it inherit shall dissolve,  
And like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of ; and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.

That is poetry.

“With what tenderly reminiscent feelings two old school-fellows meet after years of separation,” is prose.

We twa hae paid't in the burn,  
 From morning sun till dine,  
 But oceans braid between us raired,  
 Sin' Auld Lang Syne,

is poetry.

“Had they never met they would have escaped much sorrow and anguish, but their latent possibilities of deepest affection would have remained dormant,” is prose.

'Tis better to have loved and lost  
 Than never to have loved at all.

The thought has been partially suffused and illuminated with emotion.

Had we never loved so blindly,  
 Had we never loved so kindly,  
 Never met and never parted,  
 We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Here the piercing plaintiveness of the tone will not let us forget either the lovers' raptures, or the sadness of their separation. That is poetry.

“Honesty is the best policy,” is prose almost repellent in its bald philistinism. “There is a stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being ;” in this we have a perceptible heightening of the tone. “There is a moral order of the universe which it is a man's happiness to go along with, and his misery to go counter to.” There is here a further access of emotion, an additional heightening of the tone, but the passage still falls short of genuine poetry. “Clouds and darkness are round about him ; righteousness and judgment are the habitations of his seat.” The divine afflatus has breathed upon it, the passage has been made and we have poetry.

“It is a matter of common observation that mental energy is not a fixed quantity but varies from day to day, even from hour to hour,” is a plain statement of fact. “Facilities and felicities whence do they come ; suggestions and stimulations whither do they tend ?” The tone is heightened, passing or trying to pass into poetry :

The awful shadow of some unseen power  
 Floats though unseen among us ; visiting  
 This various world with an inconstant wing  
 As summer winds that creep from flower to flower.  
 Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,  
 It visits with inconstant glance  
 Each human heart and countenance ;  
 Like hues and harmonies of evening,  
 Like clouds in starlight widely spread,  
 Like memory of music fled,  
 Like aught that for its grace may be  
 Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

There the passage has been made and we have poetry.

**Definition of Poetry.**—Poetry is thus the enlistment of the emotions in the service of truth. It is not elegant trifling, nor is its object the production of pleasure. When a thought has caught the poet's fancy, and has been dwelt upon in his mind—and only a worthy thought can thus compel attention—until its full significance is revealed, and there has clustered about it a wealth of happy fancy and apt illustration, and when the thought thus touched, beautified and made effective by emotion, has been uttered with power to excite like emotion in reader or hearer, we have poetry. This power of staying the mind upon a thought till what at first appeared trivial or commonplace is revealed in a novel and interesting light, belongs in greater or less degree to all men. If it were otherwise, the enjoyment of poetry would be limited to its producers. So rare a gift, however, is a high degree of the power, that in the whole history of world literature, scarcely a dozen persons have displayed it pre-eminently and with these few, so incalculable were the moments of inspiration that the imagination of all peoples has ascribed them to the influence of a power, a muse, or a god, outside of the poet himself. The enthusiasm of the poet differs from fanaticism as radically as does the graceful and luminous flow of his thought from the movements of the ordinary understanding. The fanatic, the man of one idea, the crank, admits the value of nothing but his own pet notion. The ideas of the average "intelligent man" are a miscellaneous collection of odds and ends, gathered without purpose, arranged in no order, and full of latent and undetected inconsistencies and contradictions. From long pondering his thoughts, the poet sees their many-sidedness, their various applications, their connections with one another, their relative importance and the modifications necessitated by changing circumstances of person, place, or time. Poetry is thus, in Shelley's fine phrase, "the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds;" and its beauty—the subject of so much learned mystification—is neither more nor less than its consummate justness, its perfect balance, its unerring felicity, its "sweet reasonableness." It does not merely convince the intellect, but touches the heart. It procures acceptance for the otherwise bald and repellant truth, and wins a joyous obedience to the rule of life hitherto held arbitrary or irksome. What at any time we have ourselves feebly and intermittently felt of noble aspiration is here set in shining lines with perennial power of recalling those feelings so delightful, so elevating, but with us so evanescent. In the animation of mind, and the bracing of the will which it is thus the function of poetry to



produce, there is, of course, joy, and this is the modicum of truth in the pleasure theory of poetry; but the former and not the incidental pleasure is the true end of all art.

Imagination is just this power of vivid realization. It cannot, as often defined, be the picture-making faculty. That is rather an affair of memory or fancy. Do we not feel that Scott has sacrificed to the picturesque many of the higher and more essential qualities of poetry, and that Wordsworth, with much less command of the resources which Scott employs so abundantly, is a far truer poet? Imagination shows itself in two principal ways. Like Wordsworth, the poet may point out beauties in actual scenes and characters, which the careless eye would have never seen; like Shakespeare, he may delight us with a world whose incidents, characters, and places even, may be wholly imaginary.

Style is the individual element in poetry. All true poets possess imagination, and therefore power and charm, but these vary infinitely with the training, experience and circumstances of the poet himself. The style is thus the man—with the same sort of charm for us that an interesting personality possesses. We all know people in ordinary life of magnetic personality, as we say. In the tones of their voices, their smile, their very gestures and actions, there is something unique and exquisitely attractive. Similarly with the poets; so finely individualistic are their modes of utterance that it is quite possible for the trained literary student, by certain well-marked peculiarities of expression, to tell whether a passage previously unseen is Carlyle's or Browning's or Tennyson's. It is true that this may be done quite mechanically and without any feeling for the more elusive but more valuable qualities of a poet's style. Just as many people are able to "spot" an *Alma-Tadema* by his marble, without any real appreciation of his power, so they are able to spot a passage from Browning or Tennyson. The ease with which the superficial manner may be parodied, while what is essential in the poet's work is entirely missed, shows the worthlessness of all external study of style. Time spent on niceties of diction, rhythm and imagery is time wasted if it does not bring us in contact with genius itself, and enable us to obtain the incentive and stimulus which it is the power of a great and dominant personality to impart.

**Poetry the complement of Science.**—Poetry is not, therefore, antagonistic to science, but complementary. In Wordsworth's fine phrase it is "the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science, the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge." Science

appeals to the intellect ; poetry, to the reason vitalized by emotion. Science formulates, poetry suggests. Science is abstract ; poetry, concrete. Science analyzes, poetry combines. Science presents fractions ; poetry, wholes. Science deals with facts, as facts, while for poetry the ideal is the fact. Science bids us see, in particular things, not ideals, but merely examples of general classes. Poetry is constantly striving to give

To one brief moment caught from fleeting time,  
The appropriate calm of blest eternity ;

and to get us to see and to reverence beauty and goodness, as facts of life, as truly as baseness and vulgarity. Poetry, in short, gives us more of life than prose ; gives it with less distortion, and gives it more attractively. Though the present dearth of even tenth-rate poets would seem to make for their theories, the truth, we feel, is not with Macaulay or Nordau. Scientific advance is constant and regular. Literary revivals cannot be predicted, but return, in its own good time, poetry certainly will—changed, perhaps, in form, but with all its pristine power of bringing joy to man and calming “the weary strife of frail humanity.”

## II.—POETRY IN THE SCHOOLS.

**Our lack of culture.**—The object of putting poetry on the school curriculum is that the civilization of the future may be higher than that of the present. Matthew Arnold has deplored the Englishman’s inability, as compared with the German, to find enjoyment in anything but business. In an address delivered to the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools, last October, and published in the *School Review* for December, Professor George Harris, of the Andover Theological Seminary, made a similar comparison between the German and the American. “Think now,” he said, “of the men you meet, professional and business men. . . . Few of them have acquaintance with literature, music or art ; their principal reading is the newspapers. . . . They nearly all talk shop—the dullest kind of talk. . . . How many men know or care anything about music. . . . In comparison with the Germans we suffer in this respect. They have their defects and limitations, but they have æsthetic appreciation and enjoyment. They love good music. They are constant attendants on concerts and operas. Small towns have good orchestras that render classical compositions, which, not only to university men, but to the people generally, are a delightful and indispensable part

of life. . . . A similar contrast exists in respect to art and literature. The Germans have something we have not. They are more æsthetic, more ideal than we. An American is a practical man ; a shrewd man ; an enterprising man. Many a German is a man of culture. . . . They have more interests which are above the utilitarian." What is true of England and the United States, is far more deplorably true of Canada. As a people, our one conception of blessedness is that of making money. Impervious to ideas, in spite of our boasted modernity,—mainly imitative, by the way, of the United States,—mediævalism, economic and social, is rampant among us. With all the hard unintelligence with which even friendly foreigners have charged our race, we seem to be losing its moral earnestness, if our public life be any criterion. With little or no appreciation of literature, art or music, our spare time is given to the newspapers and the trashy magazines, dinners and suppers, whist parties and balls, the lodge and the farce or salacious play. Nor is the life of the feminine half of our people much more attractive. Practically divorced from her husband's society, through his engagements at the lodge or the club, and thrown back upon the companionship of women as badly trained as herself, the average woman occupies her leisure in gossip about her neighbors, more or less ungenerous ; in receiving and returning the calls of a list of acquaintances, carefully selected with reference to their social position ; in reading the society columns of the newspapers and noting the doings of the social big ones ; in shopping and conferences with the dressmaker ; and in fussy and unprofitable church work. It is to save the future generations from the hard unintelligence, the crude materialism, the false estimates, the conventional standards and the immense ennui of the present, that poetry is prescribed.

**Poetry as a Mental Discipline.**—As a mere intellectual training the study of literature will compare favorably with any other subject on the school curriculum. Mathematics tends to make the mind exact. The classics, in addition, give a knowledge of human nature. Science cultivates and strengthens the powers of balancing probabilities and of observation. Literature combines with the exactness of mathematics, the observation of science and the knowledge of human nature fostered by the classics, a flexibility of intelligence not otherwise so readily obtainable. A pupil for example last term gave "sovereign nun" as an equivalent for "imperial votaress" in Shakespeare's "the imperial votaress passed on in maiden meditation fancy free." Is the tact that tells one that "sovereign nun" for "imperial votaress" is absurd, not

worth acquiring? Might one not be a fair mathematician and not have it? Would not a very slight acquaintance with the way men have expressed themselves in literature prevent such a blunder? Indeed for practical life, more than anything else are required the animation of mind, the multiplying of ideas, the promptness to connect in the thoughts one thing with another and to illustrate one thing by another, to know when an author is at his best and when he is not to be trusted, what to keep and what to reject, which it is the function of literature to give and which the man of one book or no book never obtains.

**Poetry as Formative of Character.**—Far more important however is the influence of poetry on the spirit and character of man. Familiarity with poetry tends to make us feel that anything harsh, false, distorted or violent must be contrary to man's true life and thus makes possible a self-correction and readjustment of the highest possible value. Shelley, speaking of the influence of poetry, says: "These and corresponding conditions of being are experienced principally by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination; and the state of mind produced by them is at war with every base desire. The enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship, is essentially linked with such emotions, and whilst they last self appears as what it is, an atom to a universe." "Good poetry," says Matthew Arnold, "does undoubtedly tend to form the soul and character; it tends to beget a love of beauty and truth in alliance together; it suggests, however indirectly, high and noble principles of action, and it inspires the emotion so helpful in making principles operative." "To be incapable," says Wordsworth, "of a feeling of poetry, in my sense of the word, is to be without love of human nature and reverence for God."

### III.—THE TEACHING OF POETRY.

The constant aim of the teacher of literature should be to communicate to his class not the bare thought, but as much as possible of the author's spirit. Any method that interferes with this is a false method. In Ontario, indeed, we have had an exaltation of method over matter, and a little simplification would not be out of place. Don't employ too learned a jargon. Don't talk about the "intellectual analysis," the 'spiritual interpretation,' "the intensive study of literature," and what not. Don't lose yourself and your pupils' interest at once, by too minute an examination of words and phrases; it is the author's spirit, not his words, that you are to rest your mind upon. Teach the substantial meaning of the poem, but do not give your pupils the impression,



by laying too much stress on the central idea, that the concrete fulness of the poet's thought may be boiled down to a formula, dried, labelled and pigeon-holed. Study the order and connection of ideas, but do not set up a logical guillotine, and imagine that when you have sliced a poem up you have communicated its spirit to your pupils. The most important part of method is the teacher's own preparation. Scudder, Longfellow's biographer, tells a pretty story about the poet's *Maidenhood*, which well illustrates the point: "Once when it (*Maidenhood*) was printed in an illustrated paper, it fell into the hands of a poor woman living in a sterile portion of the North-West. She had papered the walls of her cabin with the journals which a friend had sent her, and the poem with its picture was upon the wall by her table. Here, as she stood at her bread-making or ironing, day after day, she gazed at the picture and read the poem, until by long brooding over it she understood it and absorbed it as people rarely possess the words they read. The friend who sent her the paper was himself a man of letters, and coming afterwards to see her in her loneliness, stood amazed and humbled as she talked artlessly to him about the poem, and disclosed the depths of her intelligence of its beauty and thought." There is the true method suggested. Ponder what you are about to teach until you have absorbed it, and then artlessly disclose its beauty to your class. Saturated with the feeling and thought of the poem, and keeping clear the communication of that thought and feeling to your class as your main object, your intelligence and experience will readily suggest a method. It is not, of course, to be expected that what you have yourself won by long meditation reinforced by the accumulated reading of years, can be communicated in one or in many lessons, but an impetus can certainly be given to the better pupils that they will never afterwards lose. It is a common experience that the pieces of literature learned in youth are those to which we return with greatest pleasure in after-life, and the teacher who does not allow his own enthusiasm to die out need not despair of opening for his pupils a fountain to which in after-life they may again and again return for fresh draughts of joy and strength.

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# LONGFELLOW.

## EVANGELINE.

### A TALE OF ACADIE.

THIS is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the  
hemlocks,  
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the  
twilight,  
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,  
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.  
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighbouring  
ocean  
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the  
forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that  
beneath it  
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice  
of the huntsman?  
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian  
farmers,—  
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the wood-  
lands,  
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of  
heaven?  
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever  
departed!  
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of  
October  
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er  
the ocean.  
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of  
Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is  
 patient,  
 Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's  
 devotion,  
 List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the  
 forest ;  
 List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

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PART THE FIRST.

I.

IN the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas, 20  
 Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré  
 Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the  
 eastward,  
 Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without  
 number.  
 Dikes, that the hands of the farmer had raised with labour  
 incessant,  
 Shut out the turbulent tides ; but at stated seasons the flood-  
 gates 25  
 Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the  
 meadows.  
 West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and  
 cornfields  
 Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain ; and away to the  
 northward  
 Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains  
 Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty  
 Atlantic 30  
 Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station  
 descended.

Describe according to Longfellow the village of Grand-Pré

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.  
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of  
hemlock,

Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the  
Henries.

Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and gables  
projecting 35

Over the basement below protected and shaded the doorway.  
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the  
sunset

Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the  
chimneys,

Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles  
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the  
golden 40

Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within  
doors

Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the  
songs of the maidens.

Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the  
children

Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless  
them.

Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and  
maidens, 45

Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.  
Then came the labourers home from the field, and serenely the  
sun sank

Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the  
belfry

Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village  
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending, 50  
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and  
contentment

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—  
 Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free  
 from  
 Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of  
 republics.  
 Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their  
 windows ; 55  
 But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the  
 owners ;  
 There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of  
 Minas,  
 Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,  
 Dwelt on his goodly acres ; and with him, directing his house-  
 hold, 60  
 Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.  
 Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters ;  
 Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow  
 flakes ;  
 White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as  
 the oak-leaves.  
 Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers ; 65  
 Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by  
 the wayside,  
 Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade  
 of her tresses !  
 Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the  
 meadows.  
 When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide  
 Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah ! fair in sooth was the  
 maiden. 70  
 Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its  
 turret





*Evangeline.*

TO FACE PAGE 4





Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his  
     hyssop  
 Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,  
 Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads  
     and her missal,  
 Wearing her Norman cap and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-  
     rings, 75  
 Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heir-  
     loom,  
 Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.  
 But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—  
 Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after con-  
     fession,  
 Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon  
     her. 80  
 When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite  
     music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer  
 Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea ; and a shady  
 Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing around  
     it.

Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath ; and a foot-  
     path 85  
 Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.  
 Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a penthouse,  
 Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the roadside,  
 Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.  
 Farther down, on the slope of a hill, was the well with its  
     moss-grown 90  
 Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the  
     horses.  
 Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns  
     and the farm-yard ;

There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique ploughs  
and the harrows ;

There were the folds for the sheep ; and there, in his feathered  
seraglio,

Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the self-  
same 95

Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.

Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village. In  
each one

Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch ; and a staircase,  
Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.

There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent  
inmates 100

Murmuring ever of love ; while above in the variant breezes  
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of  
Grand-Pré

Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his house-  
hold.

Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his  
missal, 105

Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest devotion ;  
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her  
garment !

Many a suitor came to her door by the darkness befriended,  
And, as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her foot-  
steps,

Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of  
iron ; 110

Or, at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,  
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered  
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.

But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome ;

Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith, 115  
 Who was a mighty man in the village, and honoured of all men;  
 For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,  
 Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.  
 Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest  
 childhood

Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father  
 Felician, 120

Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them  
 their letters

Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and  
 the plain-song.

But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,  
 Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.  
 There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold  
 him 125

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,  
 Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of the  
 cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.  
 Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering  
 darkness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny  
 and crevice, 130

Warm by the forge within they watched the labouring bellows,  
 And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the ashes,  
 Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the chapel.  
 Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,  
 Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the  
 meadow. 135

Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the  
 rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the  
 swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its  
fledglings ;

Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the swallow !  
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were  
children. 140

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the  
morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into  
action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.  
"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called ; for that was the  
sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with  
apples ; 145

She too would bring to her husband's house delight and  
abundance,

Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

## II.

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder  
and longer,

And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.

Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the ice-  
bound, 150

Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.

Harvests were gathered in ; and wild with the winds of  
September

Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with the angel.

All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.

Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their  
honey 155

Till the hives overflowed ; and the Indian hunters asserted  
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the foxes.

Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that beautiful  
 season,  
 Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-  
 Saints!  
 Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the  
 landscape 160  
 Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.  
 Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of the  
 ocean  
 Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony  
 blended.  
 Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-  
 yards,  
 Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of  
 pigeons, 165  
 All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the  
 great sun  
 Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapours  
 around him;  
 While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,  
 Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of the  
 forest  
 Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles  
 and jewels. 170

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and still-  
 ness.  
 Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight  
 descending  
 Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds to the  
 homestead.  
 Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on each  
 other,



And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of  
evening. 157

Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,  
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from  
her collar,

Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.  
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the  
seaside,

Where was their favourite pasture. Behind them followed the  
watch-dog, 180

Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his  
instinct,

Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly  
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers ;  
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept ; their  
protector,

When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the  
wolves howled. 185

Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the  
marshes,

Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.  
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and their  
fetlocks.

While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous  
saddles,

Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of  
crimson, 190

Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.  
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their udders  
Unto the milkmaid's hand ; whilst loud and in regular cadence  
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.

Lowling of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the farm-  
yard, 195

Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness ;

Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-  
doors,  
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly the  
farmer  
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames and the  
smoke-wreaths 200  
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him,  
Nodding and mocking along the wall with gestures fantastic,  
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into dark-  
ness.

Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair  
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the  
dresser 205  
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sun-  
shine.

Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas,  
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him  
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vine-  
yards.

Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated, 210  
Spinning flax for the loom that stood in the corner behind her.  
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent shuttle,  
While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a  
bagpipe,

Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments  
together.

As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals  
ceases, 215

Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at the  
altar,

So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion the  
clock clicked.



Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly  
lifted,

Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its  
hinges.

Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil the black-  
smith, 220

And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with him.  
"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused  
on the threshold,

"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the  
settle

Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without thee;  
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of  
tobacco; 225

Never so much thyself art thou as when, through the curling  
Smoke of the pipe or the forge, thy friendly and jovial face  
gleams

Round and red as the harvest moon through the mist of the  
marshes."

Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the black-  
smith,

Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fire-side:— 230

"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and thy ballad!  
Ever in the cheerfullest mood art thou, when others are filled  
with

Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.

Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horse-  
shoe."

Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought  
him, 235

And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly  
continued:—

"Four days now are passed since the English ships at their  
anchors

Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon pointed  
against us.

What their design may be is unknown; but all are commanded  
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's  
mandate 240

Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the mean-  
time

Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."

Then made answer the farmer:—"Perhaps some friendlier  
purpose

Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in  
England

By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted, 245  
And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle and  
children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said, warmly, the  
blacksmith,

Shaking his head as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he  
continued:—

"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal  
Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its out-  
skirts, 250

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.  
Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all  
kinds;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe of  
the mower."

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer:—

"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our  
cornfields, 255

Safer within these peaceful dikes besieged by the ocean,  
Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow of sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth ; for this is the night of the  
contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the  
village 260

Strongly have built them and well ; and, breaking the glebe  
round about them,

Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a twelve-  
month.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and inkhorn.  
Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of our  
children?"

As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in her  
lover's, 265

Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father had  
spoken,

And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary entered.

### III.

Bent like a labouring oar, that toils in the surf of the ocean,  
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the notary  
public ;

Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize,  
hung 270

Over his shoulders ; his forehead was high ; and glasses with  
horn bows

Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.

Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred  
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch  
tick.

Four long years in the times of war had he languished a  
captive, 275

Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the  
English.

Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,  
 Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and childlike.  
 He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children ;  
 For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest, 280  
 And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,  
 And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened  
 Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of  
 children ;

And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,  
 And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nut-  
 shell, 285

And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and  
 horseshoes,

With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.

Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,  
 Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his  
 right hand,

“ Father Leblanc,” he exclaimed, “ thou hast heard the talk  
 in the village, 290

And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and  
 their errand.”

Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary public,—

“ Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser ;  
 And what their errand may be I know no better than others.

Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil intention 295

Brings them here, for we are at peace ; and why then molest  
 us ? ”

“ God’s name ! ” shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible  
 blacksmith ;

“ Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the  
 wherefore ?

Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest ! ”

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary  
 public,—

“Man is unjust, but God is just ; and finally justice  
Triumphs ; and well I remember a story, that often consoled me,  
When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal.”  
This was the old man’s favourite tale, and he loved to repeat it  
When his neighbours complained that any injustice was done  
them. 306

“Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember,  
Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice  
Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left hand,  
And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided  
Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the  
people. 310

Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the  
balance,

Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above  
them.

But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted ;  
Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed,  
and the mighty

Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman’s  
palace 315

That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a suspicion  
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the household.  
She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaffold,  
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice.  
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended, 320  
Lo ! o’er the city a tempest rose ; and the bolts of the thunder  
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its left  
hand

Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the  
balance,

And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,  
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was  
inwoven.” 325



Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the  
 blacksmith  
 Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no  
 language ;  
 All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as the  
 vapours  
 Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table, 330  
 Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-brewed  
 Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village  
 of Grand-Pré ;

While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and inkhorn,  
 Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the parties,  
 Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in  
 cattle. 335

Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were completed,  
 And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin.  
 Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table  
 Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver ;  
 And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and the bride-  
 groom, 340

Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.  
 Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed,  
 While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,  
 Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.  
 Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old  
 men 345

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre,  
 Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in  
 the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's embrasure,  
 Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding the moon  
 rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows. 350  
 Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,  
 Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell from the belfry  
 Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straightway  
 Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in the  
 household. 355

Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the door-  
 step  
 Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with glad-  
 ness.

Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the  
 hearth-stone,

And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.  
 Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline fol-  
 lowed, 360

Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,  
 Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.  
 Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door of her  
 chamber.

Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its  
 clothes-press

Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully  
 folded 365

Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.  
 This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband  
 in marriage,

Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a  
 house-wife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant  
 moonlight

Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till the  
 heart of the maiden 370



Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the  
ocean.

Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood with  
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!  
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the orchard,  
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp and  
her shadow. 375

Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of sadness  
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the moon-  
light

Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.  
And, as she gazed from the window, she saw serenely the moon  
pass

Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her foot-  
steps, 380

As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with  
Hagar.

#### IV.

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand-  
Pré.

Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,  
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding at  
anchor.

Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous  
labour 380

Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the  
morning.

Now from the country around, from the farms and neighbouring  
hamlets,

Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.

Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young  
folk

Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous  
meadows, 390

Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the  
greensward,  
Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the high-  
way.

Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labour were silenced.  
Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy groups at  
the house-doors

Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped together. 395  
Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and feasted;  
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,  
All things were held in common, and what one had was  
another's.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant;  
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father; 400  
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and  
gladness

Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,  
Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.  
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the notary  
seated; 504

There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.  
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the  
beehives,

Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts and  
of waistcoats.

Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his  
snow-white

Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the  
fiddler 410

Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the  
embers.

Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,

*Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres*, and *Le Carillon de Dunkerque*,  
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.

Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances 415  
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows  
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among  
them.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter !  
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith !

So passed the morning away. And lo ! with a summons  
sonorous 420  
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a drum  
beat.

Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in  
the churchyard,  
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on  
the headstones

Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the  
forest.

Then came the guard from the ships, and marching proudly  
among them 425

Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant clangor  
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and case-  
ment,—

Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal  
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the  
soldiers.

Then arose their commander, and spake from the steps of the  
altar, 430

Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal commission.  
“You are convened this day,” he said “by his Majesty's  
orders.

Clement and kind has he been ; but how you have answered  
his kindness,

Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my  
temper

Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be  
grievous. 438

Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch:  
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all  
kinds

Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this  
province

Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell  
there

Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people! 440

Prisoners now I declare you, for such is his Majesty's pleasure!"

As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,  
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hail-  
stones

Beats down the farmer's corn in the field, and shatters his  
windows,

Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from the  
house-roofs, 445

Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their enclosures;  
So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the  
speaker.

Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then  
rose

Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,  
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the door-  
way. 450

Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce imprecations  
Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads of  
the others

Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the black-  
smith,

As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.

Flushed was his face and distorted with passion ; and wildly  
he shouted,— 455

“ Down with the tyrants of England ! we never have sworn  
them allegiance !

Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes and  
our harvests ! ”

More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of a  
soldier

Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the  
pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry conten-  
tion, 460

Lo ! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician  
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.  
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence  
All that clamourous throng ; and thus he spake to his people ;  
Deep were his tones and solemn ; in accents measured and  
mournful 465

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarm, distinctly the clock  
strikes.

“ What is this that ye do, my children ? what madness has  
seized you ?

Forty years of my life have I laboured among you, and taught  
you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another !

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and  
privations ? 470

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness ?  
This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you pro-  
fane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred ?

Lo ! where the crucified Christ from His cross is gazing upon  
you !



See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy  
compassion! 475

Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father,  
forgive them!'

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,  
Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'"

Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his  
people

Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the passionate out-  
break, 480

While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father, forgive  
them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from  
the altar;

Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people  
responded,

Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the Ave  
Maria

Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls, with  
devotion translated, 485

Rose on the ardour of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill, and  
on all sides

Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and  
children.

Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with her right  
hand

Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that, des-  
cending, 490

Lighted the village street with mysterious splendour, and roofed  
each

Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its  
windows.

Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the table ;  
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with  
wild flowers ;

There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought  
from the dairy ;

495

And at the head of the board the great arm-chair of the  
farmer.

Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the sunset  
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial  
meadows.

Ah ! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,  
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial  
ascended,—

500

Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and  
patience !

Then, all-forgotful of self, she wandered into the village,  
Cheering with looks and words the mournful hearts of the  
women,

As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they departed,  
Urged by their household cares and the weary feet of their  
children.

505

Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering  
vapours

Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descending from  
Sinai.

Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline  
lingered.

All was silent within ; and in vain at the door and the  
windows

510

Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome by emotion,  
"Gabriell" cried she aloud with tremulous voice ; but no

answer



Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of  
the living.

Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her  
father.

Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was the supper  
untasted. 515

Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms  
of terror.

Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.  
In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate rain fall  
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the  
window.

Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing  
thunder 520

Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world He  
created!

Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of  
heaven;

Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered  
till morning.

v.

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth  
day

Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-  
house. 525

Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,  
Came from the neighbouring hamlets and farms the Acadian  
women,

Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the sea-  
shore,

Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings,  
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the  
woodland. 530

Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the  
 oxen,  
 While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of  
 playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried ; and there on  
 the sea-beach

Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.  
 All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats  
 ply ; 535

All day long the wains came labouring down from the village.  
 Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,  
 Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the  
 churchyard.

Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the  
 church-doors

Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy  
 procession 540

Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.  
 Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their  
 country,

Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and way-  
 worn,

So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended  
 Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and  
 their daughters. 545

Foremost the young men came ; and, raising together their  
 voices,

Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions :—  
 " Sacred heart of the Saviour ! O inexhaustible fountain !  
 Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and  
 patience ! "

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood  
 by the wayside 550

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine  
above them

Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.  
Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,  
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction,—  
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached  
her, 555

And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.  
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,  
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and  
whispered,—

“Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another  
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may  
happen!” 560

Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her  
father

Saw she, slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his aspect!  
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye,  
and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart in his  
bosom.

But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and embraced  
him, 565

Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort availed  
not.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful pro-  
cession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of em-  
barking.

Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion  
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late,  
saw their children 570

Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.

So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,  
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her  
father.

Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the  
twilight

Deepened and darkened around ; and in haste the reflux  
ocean 575

Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach  
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery sea-  
weed.

Farther back in the midst of the household goods and the  
waggons,

Like to a gipsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,  
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them, 580

Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers.  
Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,  
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving  
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.  
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their  
pastures ; 585

Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk from their  
udders ;

Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the  
farm-yard,—

Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the  
milkmaid.

Silence reigned in the streets ; from the church no Angelus  
sounded,

Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the  
windows. 590

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been  
kindled,

Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in  
the tempest.

Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were gathered,  
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of  
children.

Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his  
parish, 595

Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and  
cheering,

Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate sea-shore.

Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her  
father,

And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man,  
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or  
emotion, 600

E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been  
taken.

Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer  
him,

Vainly offered him food ; yet he moved not, he looked not, he  
spake not,

But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-light.

"*Benedicite!*" murmured the priest in tones of compassion. 605

More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and his  
accents

Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on a  
threshold,

Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of  
sorrow.

Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the maiden.

Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that above  
them 610

Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sorrows of  
mortals.

Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in  
silence.



Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the  
 blood-red  
 Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the horizon  
 Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain and  
 meadow, 615  
 Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge shadows  
 together.  
 Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the  
 village,  
 Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that lay in the  
 roadstead.  
 Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were  
 Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quivering  
 hands of a martyr. 620  
 Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning thatch,  
 and, uplifting,  
 Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred  
 house-tops  
 Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flames intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and  
 on shipboard.  
 Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their an-  
 guish, 625  
 "We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-  
 Pré!"  
 Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farm-yards,  
 Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of cattle  
 Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.  
 Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping en-  
 campments 630  
 Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,  
 When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of  
 the whirlwind,

Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.  
 Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and  
     the horses  
 Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er  
     the meadows. 635

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless the priest and  
     the maiden  
 Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before  
     them ;  
 And as they turned at length to speak to their silent  
     companion,  
 Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the  
     seashore  
 Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed. 640  
 Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden  
 Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.  
 Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.  
 Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber ;  
 And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a multitude  
     near her. 645  
 Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon  
     her,  
 Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.  
 Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,  
 Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around  
     her,  
 And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses. 650  
 Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people,—  
 “Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season  
 Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our exile,  
 Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard.”  
 Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the  
     sea-side, 655



Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,  
 But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.  
 And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,  
 Lo! with a mournful sound like the voice of a vast congrega-  
 tion,

Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the  
 dirges; 660

'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,  
 With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying  
 landward.

Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;  
 And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the harbour,  
 Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in  
 ruins. 665

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## PART THE SECOND.

### I.

MANY a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-  
 Pré,

When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,  
 Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile,  
 Exile without an end, and without an example in story.

Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed; 670  
 Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind from  
 the northeast

Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of  
 Newfoundland.

Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city to  
 city,

From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern savannas,—  
 From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the Father  
 of Waters 75

Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the  
ocean,

Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the  
mammoth.

Friends they sought and homes ; and many, despairing, heart-  
broken,

Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend nor a  
fireside.

Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the church-  
yards. 680

Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and wandered,  
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all things.

Fair was she and young ; but, alas ! before her extended,  
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its pathway  
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and suffered  
before her, 685

Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead and abandoned,  
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by  
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the sun-  
shine.

Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, un-  
finished ;

As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine, 690  
Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended  
Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever within  
her,

Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the spirit,  
She would commence again her endless search and endeavour ; 695  
Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the crosses  
and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in its  
bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,  
 Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward. 700  
 Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved and  
 known him.

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgotten.

“Gabriel Lajeunesse!” they said; “Oh, yes! we have seen  
 him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have gone to the  
 prairies;

Coueurs-des-bois are they, and famous hunters and trap-  
 pers.” 705

“Gabriel Lajeunesse!” said others; “Oh, yes! we have seen  
 him.

He is a voyageur in the lowlands of Louisiana.”

Then would they say, “Dear child! why dream and wait for  
 him longer?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others

Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal? 710

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary’s son, who has loved thee

Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy!

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine’s tresses.”

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, “I cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not  
 elsewhere. 715

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the  
 pathway,

Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness.”

Thereupon the priest, her friend and father confessor,

Said with a smile, “O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within  
 thee!

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted; 720

If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning

Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of re-  
 freshment;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.

Patience ; accomplish thy labour ; accomplish thy work of affection !

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike. 725

Therefore accomplish thy labour of love, till the heart is made godlike,

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven ! ”

Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline laboured and waited.

Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean,  
But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered,  
“ Despair not ! ” 730

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless discomfort,

Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of existence.  
Let me essay, O Muse ! to follow the wanderer's footsteps ; --  
Not through each devious path, each changeful year of existence ;

But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course through the valley : 735

Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of its water  
Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals only ;  
Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that conceal it,

Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur ;  
Happy, at length, if he find the spot where it reaches an outlet. 740

## II.

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful River,  
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,  
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,

Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen.  
It was a band of exiles: a raft, as it were, from the ship-  
wrecked 745  
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,  
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common mis-  
fortune ;  
Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by hear-  
say,  
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred  
farmers  
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas. 750  
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father  
Felician.  
Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness sombre with  
forests,  
Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river ;  
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its  
borders.  
Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where  
plumelike 755  
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with the  
current,  
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sand-bars  
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their  
margin,  
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans waded.  
Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the river, 760  
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens,  
Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and dove-cots.  
They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual  
summer,  
Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange and  
citron,  
Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward. 765



They, too, swerved from their course ; and, entering the Bayou  
of Plaquemine,

Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters,  
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction.  
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the  
cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air 770

Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals.

Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the herons

Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,

Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter.

Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on the  
water, 775

Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining the  
arches,

Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through chinks  
in a ruin.

Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things around  
them ;

And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and sad-  
ness,—

Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot be com-  
passed. 780

As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,

Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mimosa,

So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,

Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has at-  
tained it.

But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that  
faintly 785

Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the  
moonlight.

It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of a  
phantom.



Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered before  
 her,  
 And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and  
 nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one of the  
 oarsmen, 790  
 And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure  
 Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew a blast on  
 his bugle.  
 Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy the blast  
 rang,  
 Breaking the seal of silence and giving tongues to the forest.  
 Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred to the  
 music. 795

Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,  
 Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches ;  
 But not a voice replied ; no answer came from the darkness ;  
 And when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the  
 silence.

Then Evangeline slept ; but the boatmen rowed through the  
 midnight, 800  
 Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boatsongs,  
 Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers,  
 While through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of  
 the desert,  
 Far off,—indistinct,—as of wave or wind in the forest,  
 Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim  
 alligator. 805

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades ; and  
 before them  
 Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.  
 Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations  
 Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the lotus

✓

Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen, 810  
 Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,

And with the heat of noon ; and numberless sylvan islands,  
 Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,

Near to whose shore they glided along, invited to slumber.

Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended. 815

Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,  
 Safely their boat was moored ; and scattered about on the greensward,

Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers slumbered.  
 Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.

Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grapevine 820

Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,  
 On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,  
 Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to blossom.

Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.

Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven 825

Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer, ever nearer, among the numberless islands,  
 Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,  
 Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.

Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver. 830

At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn.

Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness

Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.  
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,  
Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow. 835  
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,  
But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos ;  
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the  
willows ;

All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were  
the sleepers ;

Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering  
maiden. 840

Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the  
prairie.

After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the  
distance,

As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden  
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father Felician !  
Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders. 845  
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition ?

Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit ?"  
Then, with a blush she added, "Alas for my credulous fancy !  
Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning."

But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he  
answered,— 850

"Daughter, thy words are not idle ; nor are they to me with-  
out meaning.

Feeling is deep and still ; and the word that floats on the  
surface

Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is  
hidden.

Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illu-  
sions.

Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the south  
ward, 856

On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur and St.  
Martin.

There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her  
bridegroom,

There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheepfold.  
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit-  
trees;

Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens 860  
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.  
They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana."

With these words of cheer they arose and continued their  
journey.

Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon  
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape; 865  
Twinkling vapours arose; and sky and water and forest  
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled to-  
gether.

Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,  
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless  
water.

Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness. 870  
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling  
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around  
her.

Then from a neighbouring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of  
singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,  
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music, 875  
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent  
to listen.

Plaintive at first were the tones and sad; then soaring to mad-

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.  
 Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation ;  
 Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in  
 derision, 880

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops  
 Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the  
 branches.

With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbb'd with  
 emotion,

Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows through the  
 green Opelousas,

And, through the amber air, above the crest of the wood-  
 land, 885

Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighbouring  
 dwelling ;—

Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.

### III.

Near to the banks of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks from  
 whose branches

Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe flaunted,  
 Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-  
 tide, 890

Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A garden  
 Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,  
 Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of timbers  
 Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.

Large and low was the roof ; and on slender columns sup-  
 ported, 895

Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,  
 Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it.

At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,  
 Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,  
 Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of rivals. 900



Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and sunshine  
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself was in  
shadow,

And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding  
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.

In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a path-  
way 905

Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limitless  
prairie,

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending.

Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas  
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm in the  
tropics,

Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grapevines. 910

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the prairie,  
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,  
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deerskin.  
Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish  
sombbrero

Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its  
master. 915

Round about him were numberless herds of kine that were  
grazing

Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapoury freshness  
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the lands-  
scape.

Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and expanding  
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded 920  
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the  
evening.

Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle  
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.  
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the  
prairie,



And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance. 925

Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the gate of the garden

Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing to meet him.

Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and forward

Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder ;  
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the blacksmith. 930

Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden. There in an arbor of roses with endless question and answer Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly embraces,

Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thoughtful, Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not ; and now dark doubts and misgivings 935

Stole o'er the maiden's heart ; and Basil, somewhat embarrassed, Broke the silence and said, " If you came by the Atchafalaya, How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous ? "

Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed. Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent, 940

" Gone! is Gabriel gone! " and, concealing her face on his shoulder,

All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and lamented.

Then the good Basil said,—and his heart grew blithe as he said it,—

" Be of good cheer, my child ; it is only to-day he departed. Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses. 945

Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit  
 Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.  
 Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,  
 Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,  
 He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens, 960  
 Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent  
 him

Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.  
 Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,  
 Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.  
 Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover; 965  
 He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are  
 against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the  
 morning,  
 We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the  
 river,

Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler. 966  
 Long under Basil's roof had he lived, like a god on Olympus,  
 Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals.  
 Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.

"Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave Acadian minstrel!"  
 As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession; and straight-  
 way 965

Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting the old  
 man

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil enraptured,  
 Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gossips,  
 Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers and daughters.  
 Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-devant black-  
 smith, 970

All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal demeanour;

Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil and the climate,  
 And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his who  
 would take them ;  
 Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go and do  
 likewise.  
 Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the breezy  
 veranda, 975  
 Entered the hall of the house, where already the supper of Basil  
 Waited his late return ; and they rested and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.  
 All was silent without, and illuming the landscape with silver,  
 Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars ; but within  
 doors, 980  
 Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmer-  
 ing lamplight.  
 Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the herds-  
 man  
 Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless pro-  
 fusion.  
 Lighting his pipe that was filled with sweet Natchitoches  
 tobacco,  
 Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled as they  
 listened :--- 985  
 " Welcome once more, my friends, who long have been friend-  
 less and homeless,  
 Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than  
 the old one !  
 Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers ;  
 Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer ;  
 Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil, as a keel  
 through the water. 990  
 All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom ; and  
 grass grows

More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.

Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed in the prairies ;

Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests of timber

With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed into houses. 995

After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow with harvests,

No King George of England shall drive you away from your homesteads,

Burning your dwellings and barns and stealing your farms and your cattle."

Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from his nostrils,

While his huge, brown hand came thundering down on the table, 1000

So that the guests all started ; and Father Felician, astounded, Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to his nostrils.

But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder and gayer :—

"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the fever ! For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate, 1005

Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nutshell !"

Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps approaching

Sounded upon the stairs and the floors of the breezy veranda. It was the neighbouring Creoles and small Acadian planters, Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the herdsman. 1010

Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbours : Friend clasped friend in his arms ; and they who before were as strangers,

Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,  
 Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.

But in the neighbouring hall a strain of music, proceeding 1015  
 From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,  
 Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,  
 All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the mad-  
 dening

Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,  
 Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering gar-  
 ments. 1020

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and  
 the herdsman

Sat, conversing together of past and present and future ;  
 While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her  
 Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music  
 Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sad-  
 ness 1025

Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the  
 garden.

Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the forest,  
 Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On the river  
 Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam of  
 the moonlight,

Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious  
 spirit. 1030

Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the  
 garden

Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and  
 confession

Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian.  
 Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows and  
 night-dews,

Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical  
 moonlight 1035



Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,  
As, through the garden gate, and beneath the shade of the  
oak-trees,  
Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless prairie.  
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-flies  
Gleam and float away in mingled and infinite numbers. 1040  
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens,  
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and wor-  
ship,  
Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that temple,  
As if a hand had appeared and written upon them, "Upharsin."  
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and the fire-  
flies, 1045  
Wandered alone, and she cried, "O Gabriel! O my beloved!  
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold thee?  
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not reach me?  
Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the prairie!  
Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the woodlands  
around me! 1050  
Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labour,  
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in thy  
slumbers!  
When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded about  
thee?"  
Loud and sudden and near the note of a whippoorwill sounded  
Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the neighbouring  
thickets, 1055  
Farther and farther away it floated and dropped into silence.  
"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular caverns of  
darkness;  
And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded, "To-  
morrow!"



Bright rose the sun next day ; and all the flowers of the  
 garden  
 Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed his  
 tresses 1060  
 With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases of  
 crystal.  
 "Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the shadowy  
 threshold ;  
 "See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his fasting and  
 famine,  
 And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the bridegroom  
 was coming."  
 "Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling, with Basil  
 descended 1065  
 Down to to the river's brink, where the boatmen already were  
 waiting.  
 Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine,  
 and gladness,  
 Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding be-  
 fore them,  
 Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.  
 Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded, 1070  
 Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river,  
 Nor, after many days, had they found him ; but vague and  
 uncertain  
 Rumours alone were their guides through a wild and desolate  
 country ;  
 Till, at the little inn, of the Spanish town of Adayes,  
 Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the garrulous  
 landlord, 1075  
 That on the day before, with horses and guides and companions,  
 Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.

## IV.

Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains  
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous sum-  
mits.

Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge, like a  
gateway, 1080

Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's waggon,  
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and Owyhee.

Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river Moun-  
tains,

Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the Ne-  
braska ;

And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish  
sierras, 1085

Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the wind of the  
desert,

Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the ocean,  
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibra-  
tions.

Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful  
prairies,

Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine, 1090

Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.

Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk and the  
roebuck ;

Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of riderless horses ;  
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with  
travel ;

Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children, 1095  
Staining the desert with blood ; and above their terrible war-  
trails

Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,  
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,

By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.  
 Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these savage  
     marauders ; 1100  
 Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift-running  
     rivers ;  
 And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,  
 Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the brook-  
     side,  
 And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,  
 Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them. 1105

    Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Moun-  
     tains,  
 Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him.  
 Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil  
 Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.  
 Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of his  
     camp-fire 1110  
 Rise in the morning air from the distant plain ; but at night-  
     fall,  
 When they had reached the place, they found only embers and  
     ashes.  
 And, though their hearts were sad at times and their bodies  
     were weary,  
 Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana  
 Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and vanished  
     before them. 1115  
 Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently  
     entered  
 Into their little camp an Indian woman, whose features  
 Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as her  
     sorrow.  
 She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her people,  
 From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Camanches, 1120

Where her Canadian husband, a *coureur-des-bois*, had been  
murdered.

Touched were their hearts at her story, and warmest and  
friendliest welcome

Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and feasted  
among them

On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on the embers.

But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his com-  
panions, 1125

Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the deer and  
the bison,

Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where the  
quivering fire-light

Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms wrapped up  
in their blankets,

Then at the door of *Evangeline's* tent she sat and repeated  
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her Indian  
accent, 1130

All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains, and  
reverses.

Much *Evangeline* wept at the tale, and to know that another  
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been dis-  
appointed.

Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's compas-  
sion,

Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was near  
her, 1135

She in turn related her love and all its disasters.

Mute with wonder the *Shawnee* sat, and when she had ended  
Still was mute ; but at length, as if a mysterious horror  
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale of  
the *Mowis* ;

*Mowis*, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a  
maiden, 1140

But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the wig-  
wam,

Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,  
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into the  
forest.

Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird  
incantation,

Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a  
phantom, 1145

That, through the pines o'er her father's lodge, in the hush of  
the twilight,

Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the  
maiden,

Till she followed his green and waving plume through the  
forest,

And nevermore returned, nor was seen again by her people.

Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened 1150  
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around  
her

Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the  
enchantress.

Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the moon rose,  
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splendour  
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling the  
woodland. 1155

With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the branches  
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whispers.

Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's heart, but a  
secret,

Subtle sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,

As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of the  
swallow. 1160

It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of spirits  
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a moment



That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a phantom  
 With this thought she slept, and the fear and the phantom had  
 vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed, and the  
 Shawnee 1105  
 Said, as they journeyed along,—“On the western slope of these  
 mountains

Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of the Mission.  
 Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary and Jesus ;  
 Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain, as they  
 hear him.”

Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline an-  
 swered, 1170

“Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us !”  
 Thither they turned their steeds ; and behind a spur of the  
 mountains,

Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,  
 And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,  
 Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit  
 Mission. 1175

Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,  
 Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix  
 fastened

High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grapevines,  
 Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling be-  
 neath it.

This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate  
 arches 1180

Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,  
 Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the  
 branches.

Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approaching,  
 Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions.



But when the service was done, and the benediction had  
fallen 1185

Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands  
of the sower,

Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers, and bade  
them

Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled with benignant  
expression,

Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue in the  
forest,

And, with words of kindness, conducted them into his wig-  
wam. 1190

There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on cakes of the  
maize-ear

Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of the  
teacher.

Soon was their story told; and the priest with solemnity  
answered :—

“ Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated  
On this mat by my side, where now the maiden reposes, 1195  
Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued his  
journey !”

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an accent  
of kindness ;

But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in winter the snow-  
flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.

“ Far to the north he has gone,” continued the priest “ but in  
autumn, 1200

When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission.”

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,  
“ Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted.”

So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,

Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and com-  
panions, 1205  
Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the  
Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other,—  
Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were  
springing  
Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving  
above her,  
Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and  
forming 1210  
Cloisters for medicant crows and granaries pillaged by squirrels.  
Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the  
maidens  
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,  
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the corn-  
field.  
Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her lover. 1215  
“Patience!” the priest would say; “have faith, and thy prayer  
will be answered !  
Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head from the meadow,  
See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true as the  
magnet ;  
This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has planted  
Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveller’s journey 1220  
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.  
Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,  
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance;  
But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly.  
Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter 1225  
Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of  
nepenthe.”

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter,—yet  
 Gabriel came not ;  
 Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin and  
 bluebird

Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.  
 But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was wafted 1230  
 Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blossom.

Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests,  
 Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw River.  
 And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of St.  
 Lawrence,

Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mission. 1235  
 When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,  
 She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan forests,  
 Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin !

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons and  
 places

Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden ;— 1240  
 Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian Missions,  
 Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,  
 Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities.

Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.  
 Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long jour-  
 ney ; 1245

Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.  
 Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,  
 Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the  
 shadow.

Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray o'er her  
 forehead,

Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon, 1250  
 As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning.

## V.

In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's  
waters,

Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,  
Stands on the banks of the beautiful stream the city he founded.  
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of  
beauty, 1255

And the streets still reëcho the names of the trees of the forest,  
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts they  
molested.

There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile,  
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.  
There old René Leblanc had died; and when he departed, 1260  
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.  
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the  
city,

Something that spake to her heart, and made her no longer a  
stranger;

And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the  
Quakers,

For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country, 1265

Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters.

So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavour,  
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,  
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and  
her footsteps.

As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning 1270

Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,

Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,

So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far  
below her,

Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the pathway  
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the  
distance. 1275

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,  
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld  
him,

Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and absence.  
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.

Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but  
transfigured; 1280

He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not  
absent;

Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,  
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.  
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices,  
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma. 1285

Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow  
Meekly with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour.  
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; frequenting  
Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city,  
Where distress and want concealed themselves from the sun-  
light, 1290

Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.  
Night after night when the world was asleep, as the watchman  
repeated

Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,  
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.  
Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the  
suburbs 1295

Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the  
market,

Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watch-  
ings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,  
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild  
pigeons,



Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their craws  
but an acorn. 1300

And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September,  
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the  
meadow,

So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,  
Spread to a brackish lake the silver stream of existence.

Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm, the  
oppressor ; 1305

But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger ;—  
Only, alas ! the poor, who had neither friends nor attendants,  
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless.  
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and  
woodlands ;—

Now the city surrounds it ; but still, with its gateway and  
wicket 1310

Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls seem to echo  
Softly the words of the Lord :—“ The poor ye always have with  
you.”

Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy. The  
dying

Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to behold there  
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splen-  
dor, 1315

Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,  
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.

Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,  
Into whose shining gates erelong their spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and  
silent, 1320

Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the alms-  
house.

Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the garden,



And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,  
That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and  
beauty.

Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the  
east-wind, 1325

Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of  
Christ Church,

While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were  
wafted

Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their  
church at Wicaco.

Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her  
spirit ;

Something within her said, "At length thy trials are  
ended ;" 1330

And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sick-  
ness.

Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,  
Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in silence  
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their  
faces,

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the  
roadside, 1335

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,  
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her  
presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a  
prison.

And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,  
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it forever. 1340  
Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night time ;  
Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,  
Still she stood, with her colourless lips apart, while a shudder

Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped  
from her fingers, 1345

And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the  
morning.

Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,  
That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.

On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.  
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded his  
temples; 1350

But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment  
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;  
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.

Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,  
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its  
portals, 1355

That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.  
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted  
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the  
darkness,

Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sinking.  
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverbera-  
tions, 1360

Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that suc-  
ceeded

Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,  
"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.

Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his child-  
hood;

Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them, 1365  
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under  
their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.  
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,  
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents un-  
uttered 1370

Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue  
would have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,  
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.

Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into  
darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a case-  
ment. 1376

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,  
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,  
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!  
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,  
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I thank  
thee!" 1380

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Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from its  
shadow,  
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.  
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,  
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.  
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them, 1385  
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and  
forever,  
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy,  
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from  
their labours,  
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their  
journey!

Still stands the forest primeval ; but under the shade of its  
branches

1390

Dwells another race, with other customs and language.

Only along the shore of the mournful and misty Atlantic

Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile

Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.

In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still busy ; 1395

Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of  
homespun,

And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,

While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighbouring  
ocean

Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the  
forest.



## A PSALM OF LIFE.

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO THE PSALMIST.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,  
 "Life is but an empty dream!"  
 For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
 And things are not what they seem.

Life is real ! Life is earnest ! 5  
 And the grave is not its goal ;  
 "Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"  
 Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
 Is our destined end or way ; 10  
 But to act, that each to-morrow  
 Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,  
 And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
 Still, like muffled drums, are beating 15  
 Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,  
 In the bivouac of Life,  
 Be not like dumb, driven cattle !  
 Be a hero in the strife ! 20

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant !  
 Let the dead Past bury its dead !  
 Act—act in the living Present !  
 Heart within, and God o'erhead !



- Lives of great men all remind us 25  
 We can make our lives sublime,  
 And, departing, leave behind us  
 Footprints on the sands of time ;—
- Footprints, that perhaps another,  
 Sailing o'er life's solemn main, 30  
 A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
 Seeing, shall take heart again.
- Let us, then, be up and doing,  
 With a heart for any fate ;  
 Still achieving, still pursuing, 35  
 Learn to labour and to wait.

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### THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

- It was the schooner Hesperus,  
 That sailed the wintry sea ;  
 And the skipper had taken his little daughter,  
 To bear him company.
- Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax, 5  
 Her cheeks like the dawn of day,  
 And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds  
 That ope in the month of May.
- The skipper he stood beside the helm,  
 His pipe was in his mouth, 10  
 And he watched how the veering flaw did blow  
 The smoke now West, now South.
- Then up and spake an old sailor,  
 Had sailed the Spanish Main,  
 "I pray thee put into yonder port, 15  
 For I fear a hurricane.

“ Last night, the moon had a golden ring,  
And to-night no moon we see !”  
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,  
And a scornful laugh laughed he. 20

Colder and louder blew the wind,  
A gale from the North-east ;  
The snow fell hissing in the brine,  
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain 25  
The vessel in its strength ;  
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,  
Then leaped her cable's length.

“ Come hither ! come hither ! my little daughter,  
And do not tremble so ; 30  
For I can weather the roughest gale  
That ever wind did blow.”

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat  
Against the stinging blast ;  
He cut a rope from a broken spar, 35  
And bound her to the mast.

“ O father ! I hear the church-bells ring,  
O say what may it be ?”  
“ 'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast !”  
And he steered for the open sea. 40

“ O father ! I hear the sound of guns,  
O say what may it be ?”  
“ Some ship in distress, that cannot live  
In such an angry sea !”

“ O father ! I see a gleaming light,  
 O say what may it be ?” 45  
 But the father answered never a word,  
 A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,  
 With his face turned to the skies, 50  
 The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow  
 On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed  
 That savèd she might be ;  
 And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave 55  
 On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,  
 Through the whistling sleet and snow,  
 Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept  
 Towards the reef of Norman's woe. 60

And ever the fitful gusts between  
 A sound came from the land ;  
 It was the sound of the trampling surf,  
 On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows, 65  
 She drifted a dreary wreck,  
 And a whooping billow swept the crew  
 Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves  
 Looked soft as carded wool, 70  
 But the cruel rocks, they gored her side  
 Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,  
 With the masts went by the board ;  
 Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank 75  
 Ho ! ho ! the breakers roared !

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,  
 A fisherman stood aghast,  
 To see the form of a maiden fair,  
 Lashed close to a drifting mast. 80

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,  
 The salt tears in her eyes ;  
 And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,  
 On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus, 85  
 In the midnight and the snow !  
 Christ save us all from a death like this,  
 On the reef of Norman's Woe !

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THE DAY IS DONE.

The day is done, and the darkness  
 Falls from the wings of Night,  
 As a feather is wafted downward  
 From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village 5  
 Glean through the rain and the mist,  
 And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,  
 That my soul cannot resist :

A feeling of sadness and longing,  
 That is not akin to pain,  
 And resembles sorrow only 10  
 As the mist resembles the rain.

- Come, read to me some poem,  
Some simple and heartfelt lay,  
That shall soothe this restless feeling,  
And banish the thoughts of day. 15
- Not from the grand old masters,  
Not from the bards sublime,  
Whose distant footsteps echo  
Through the corridors of time. 20
- For, like strains of martial music,  
Their mighty thoughts suggest  
Life's endless toil and endeavour;  
And to-night I long for rest.
- Read from some humbler poet, 25  
Whose songs gushed from his heart,  
As showers from the clouds of summer,  
Or tears from the eyelids start;
- Who, through long days of labour,  
And nights devoid of ease, 30  
Still heard in his soul the music  
Of wonderful melodies.
- Such songs have power to quiet  
The restless pulse of care,  
And come like the benediction 35  
That follows after prayer.
- Then read from the treasured volume  
The poem of thy choice,  
And lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The beauty of thy voice. 40



And the night shall be filled with music,  
 And the cares that infest the day,  
 Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
 And as silently steal away.

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THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

Somewhat back from the village street  
 Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.  
 Across its antique portico  
 Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw ;  
 And from its station in the hall 5  
 An ancient timepiece says to all,—  
     “ Forever—never !  
     Never — forever ! ”

Half-way up the stairs it stands,  
 And points and beckons with its hands 10  
 From its case of massive oak,  
 Like a monk, who, under his cloak,  
 Crosses himself, and sighs, alas !  
 With sorrowful voice to all who pass,—  
     “ Forever—never ! 15  
     Never—forever ! ”

By day its voice is low and light ;  
 But in the silent dead of night,  
 Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,  
 It echoes along the vacant hall, 20  
 Along the ceiling, along the floor,  
 And seems to say, at each chamber-door,—  
     “ Forever—never !  
     Never—forever ! ”

Through days of sorrow and of mirth, 25  
 Through days of death and days of birth,  
 Through every swift vicissitude  
 Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,  
 And as if, like God, it all things saw,  
 It calmly repeats those words of awe,— 30  
     “ Forever—never !  
     Never—forever ! ” -

In that mansion used to be  
 Free-hearted Hospitality ;  
 His great fires up the chimney roared ; 35  
 The stranger feasted at his board ;  
 But, like the skeleton at the feast,  
 That warning timepiece never ceased,—  
     “ Forever—never !  
     Never—forever ! ” 40

There groups of merry children played,  
 There youths and maidens dreaming strayed ;  
 O precious hours ! O golden prime,  
 And affluence of love and time !  
 Even as a miser counts his gold, 45  
 Those hours the ancient timepiece told,—  
     “ Forever—never !  
     Never—forever ! ”

From that chamber, clothed in white,  
 The bride came forth on her wedding night ; 50  
 There, in that silent room below,  
 The dead lay in his shroud of snow ;  
 And in the hush that followed the prayer,  
 Was heard the old clock on the stair,—  
     “ Forever—never ! 55  
     Never—forever ! ”

All are scattered now and fled,  
 Some are married, some are dead ;  
 And when I ask, with throbs of pain,  
 "Ah ! when shall they all meet again ?" 60  
 As in the days long since gone by,  
 The ancient timepiece makes reply,—  
     " Forever—never !  
     Never—forever !"

Never here, forever there, 65  
 Where all parting, pain, and care,  
 And death, and time shall disappear,—  
 Forever there, but never here !  
 The horologe of eternity  
 Sayeth this incessantly,— 70  
     " Forever—never !  
     Never—forever !"

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 THE FIRE OF DRIFT-WOOD. 1846

DEVEREUX FARM, NEAR MARBLEHEAD. X

We sat within the farm-house old,  
 Whose windows, looking o'er the bay,  
 Gave to the sea-breeze, damp and cold,  
 An easy entrance, night and day.

Not far away we saw the port, 5  
 The strange, old-fashioned, silent town,  
 The light-house, the dismantled fort,  
 The wooden houses, quaint and brown.

We sat and talked until the night,  
 Descending, filled the little room ; 10  
 Our faces faded from the sight,  
 Our voices only broke the gloom.

We spake of many a vanished scene,  
 Of what we once had thought and said,  
 Of what had been, and might have been, 15  
 And who was changed, and who was dead ;

And all that fills the hearts of friends,  
 When first they feel, with secret pain,  
 Their lives thenceforth have separate ends,  
 And never can be one again ; 20

The first light <sup>straw</sup> swerving of the heart,  
 That words are powerless to express,  
 And leave it still unsaid in part,  
 Or say it in too great excess.

The very tones in which we spake 25  
 Had something strange, I could but mark ;  
 The leaves of memory seem to make  
 A mournful rustling in the dark.

Oft died the words upon our lips,  
 As suddenly, from out the fire 30  
 Built of the wreck of stranded ships,  
 The flames would leap and then expire.

And, as their splendour flashed and failed,  
 We thought of wrecks upon the main,—  
 Of ships dismasted, that were hailed 35  
 And sent no answer back again.

The windows, rattling in their frames,  
 The ocean, roaring up the beach,  
 The gusty blast, the bickering flames,  
 All mingled vaguely in our speech ; 40

Until they made themselves a part  
 Of fancies floating through the brain,—  
 The long-lost ventures of the heart,  
 That send no answers back again.

O flames that glowed ! O hearts that yearned !      45  
 They were indeed too much akin,  
 The drift-wood fire without that burned,  
 The thoughts that burned and glowed within.

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RESIGNATION.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,  
 But one dead lamb is there !  
 There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,  
 But has one vacant chair !

The air is full of farewells to the dying,      5  
 And mournings for the dead ;  
 The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,  
 Will not be comforted !

Let us be patient ! These severe afflictions  
 Not from the ground arise,      10  
 But oftentimes celestial benedictions  
 Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapours ;  
 Amid these earthly damps,  
 What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers      15  
 May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death ! What seems so is transition ;  
 This life of mortal breath  
 Is but a suburb of the life elysian, *heavenly*  
 Whose portal we call Death.      20



She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—  
 But gone unto that school  
 Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
 And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion, (25)  
 By guardian angels led,  
 Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
 She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing (30)  
 In those bright realms of air ;  
 Year after year her tender steps pursuing,  
 Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken (35)  
 The bond which nature gives,  
 Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,  
 May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her ;  
 For when with raptures wild,  
 In our embraces we again enfold her,  
 She will not be a child ; (40)

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,  
 Clothed with celestial grace ;  
 And beautiful with all the soul's expansion  
 Shall we behold her face.

And though at times, impetuous with emotion (45)  
 And anguish long suppressed,  
 The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,  
 That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling  
 We may not wholly stay ; 50  
 By silence sanctifying, not concealing,  
 The grief that must have way.

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS. *Written on D*

*Death of Wellington Sept-14, 1852. 18*  
 A mist was driving down the British Channel,

The day was just begun,  
 And through the window-panes, on floor and panel,  
 Streamed the red autumn sun.

It glanced on flowing flag and rippling pennon, 5  
 And the white sails of ships ;  
 And, from the frowning rampart, the black cannon,  
 Hailed it with feverish lips.

Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hythe and Dover  
 Were all alert that day, 10  
 To see the French war-steamers speeding over,  
 When the fog cleared away.

Sullen and silent, and like couchant lions,  
 Their cannon, through the night,  
 Holding their breath, had watched, in grim defiance, 15  
 The sea-coast opposite.

And now they roared at drum-beat from their stations  
 On every citadel ;  
 Each answering each, with morning salutations,  
 That all was well. 20

And down the coast, all taking up the burden,  
 Replied the distant forts,  
 As if to summon from his sleep the Warden  
 And Lord of the Cinque Ports.

Him shall no sunshine from the fields of azure, 25  
 No drum-beat from the wall,  
 No morning gun from the black fort's embrasure,  
 Awaken with its call !

No more, surveying with an eye impartial  
 The long line of the coast, 30  
 Shall the gaunt figure of the old Field Marshal  
 Be seen upon his post !

For in the night, unseen, a single warrior,  
 In sombre harness mailed,  
 Dreaded of man, and surnamed the Destroyer, 35  
 The rampart wall had scaled.

He passed into the chamber of the sleeper,  
 The dark and silent room,  
 And as he entered, darker grew, and deeper,  
 The silence and the gloom. 40

He did not pause to parley or dissemble,  
 But smote the Warden hoar ;  
 Ah ! what a blow ! that made all England tremble  
 And groan from shore to shore.

Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon waited, 45  
 The sun rose bright o'erhead ;  
 Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated  
 That a great man was dead.

---

### EXCELSIOR.

The shades of night were falling fast,  
 As through an Alpine village passed  
 A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice  
 A banner with the strange device,  
 Excelsior ! 5

His brow was sad ; his eye beneath,  
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath ;  
And like a silver clarion rung  
The accents of that unknown tongue,  
                    Excelsior !

10

In happy homes he saw the light  
Of household fires gleam warm and bright ;  
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,  
And from his lips escaped a groan,  
                    Excelsior !

15

“Try not the Pass !” the old man said ;  
“Dark lowers the tempest overhead,  
The roaring torrent is deep and wide !”  
And loud that clarion voice replied,  
                    Excelsior !

20

“O stay,” the maiden said, “and rest  
Thy weary head upon this breast !”  
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,  
But still he answered, with a sigh,  
                    Excelsior !

25

“Beware the pine-tree’s withered branch !  
Beware the awful avalanche !”  
This was the peasant’s last Good-night.  
A voice replied, far up the height,  
                    Excelsior !

30

At break of day, as heavenward  
The pious monks of Saint Bernard  
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,  
A voice cried through the startled air,  
                    Excelsior !

35





As, sweeping and eddying through them,  
Rose the belated tide,  
And, streaming into the moonlight,  
The sea-weed floated wide. 20

And like those waters rushing  
Among the wooden piers,  
A flood of thoughts came o'er me  
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh, how often, 25  
In the days that had gone by,  
I had stood on that bridge at midnight  
And gazed on that wave and sky !

How often, oh, how often,  
I had wished that the ebbing tide 30  
Would bear me away on its bosom  
O'er the ocean wild and wide !

For my heart was hot and restless,  
And my life was full of care,  
And the burden laid upon me 35  
Seemed greater than I could bear.

But now it has fallen from me,  
It is buried in the sea ;  
And only the sorrow of others  
Throws its shadow over me. 40

Yet whenever I cross the river  
On its bridge with wooden piers,  
Like the odour of brine from the ocean  
Comes the thought of other years.



The shadow of the linden-trees  
Lay moving on the grass ;  
Between them and the moving boughs,  
A shadow, thou didst pass. 15

Thy dress was like the lilies,  
And thy heart as pure as they :  
One of God's holy messengers  
Did walk with me that day. 20

I saw the branches of the trees  
Bend down thy touch to meet,  
The clover-blossoms in the grass  
Rise up to kiss thy feet.

“Sleep, sleep to-day, tormenting cares,  
Of earth and folly born !”  
Solemnly sang the village choir  
On that sweet Sabbath morn. 25

Through the closed blinds the golden sun  
Poured in a dusty beam,  
Like the celestial ladder seen  
By Jacob in his dream. 30

And ever and anon, the wind,  
Sweet-scented with the hay,  
Turned o'er the hymn-book's fluttering leaves  
That on the window lay. 35

Long was the good man's sermon,  
Yet it seemed not so to me ;  
For he spake of Ruth the beautiful,  
And still I thought of thee. 40

Long was the prayer he uttered,  
Yet it seemed not so to me ;  
For in my heart I prayed with him,  
And still I thought of thee.

But now, alas ! the place seems changed ; 45  
Thou art no longer here :  
Part of the sunshine of the scene  
With thee did disappear.

Though thoughts, deep-rooted in my heart,  
Like pine-trees dark and high, 50  
Subdue the light of noon, and breathe  
A low and ceaseless sigh ;

This memory brightens o'er the past,  
As when the sun, concealed  
Behind some cloud that near us hangs, 55  
Shines on a distant field.

---







*Ullswater.*

# WORDSWORTH.

---

## THE EDUCATION OF NATURE.

Three years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown :  
This Child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own. 5

' Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse : and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower, 10  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

' She shall be sportive as the Fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn  
Or up the mountain springs ; 15  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

' The floating Clouds their state shall lend  
To her ; for her the willow bend ; 20  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

‘The Stars of midnight shall be dear 25  
 To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
 In many a secret place  
 Where Rivulets dance their wayward round,  
 And beauty born of murmuring sound  
 Shall pass into her face. 30

‘And vital feelings of delight  
 Shall rear her form to stately height,  
 Her virgin bosom swell ;  
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
 While she and I together live 35  
 Here in this happy Dell.’

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—  
 How soon my Lucy’s race was run !  
 She died, and left to me  
 This heath, this calm and quiet scene ; 40  
 The memory of what has been,  
 And never more will be.

---

“SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.”

She was a Phantom of delight  
 When first she gleam’d upon my sight ;  
 A lovely Apparition, sent  
 To be a moment’s ornament ;  
 Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair ; 5  
 Like Twilight’s, too, her dusky hair ;  
 But all things else about her drawn  
 From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;  
 A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
 To haunt, to startle, and waylay. 10

I saw her upon nearer view,  
 A Spirit, yet a Woman too !  
 Her household motions light and free,  
 And steps of virgin-liberty ;  
 A countenance in which did meet 15  
 Sweet records, promises as sweet ;  
 A Creature not too bright or good  
 For human nature's daily food,  
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles. 20

And now I see with eye serene  
 The very pulse of the machine ;  
 A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
 A Traveller between life and death :  
 The reason firm, the temperate will, 25  
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;  
 A perfect Woman, nobly plann'd  
 To warn, to comfort, and command ;  
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
 With something of an angel light. 30

---

A LESSON.

There is a Flower, the Lesser Celandine,  
 That shrinks like many more from cold and rain,  
 And the first moment that the sun may shine,  
 Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again !

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm, 5  
 Or blasts the green field and the trees distress,  
 Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm  
 In close self-shelter, like a thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I past,  
 And recognized it, though an alter'd form, 10  
 Now standing forth an offering to the blast,  
 And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopp'd and said, with inly-mutter'd voice,  
 'It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold ;  
 This neither is its courage nor its choice, 15  
 But its necessity in being old.

'The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew ;  
 It cannot help itself in its decay ;  
 Stiff in its members, wither'd, changed of hue.'  
 And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was gray. 20

To be a prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,  
 A miser's pensioner—behold our lot !  
 O Man ! that from thy fair and shining youth  
 Age might but take the things Youth needed not !

---

### TO THE SKYLARK.

Ethereal Minstrel ! Pilgrim of the sky !  
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?  
 Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye  
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?  
 Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will, 5  
 Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond  
 Mount, daring Warbler ! that love-prompted strain  
 ('Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)  
 Thriest not the less the bosom of the plain : 10  
 Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing  
 All independent of the leafy Spring.







*Rydal Mount.*

Wordsworth's House, near (Grainmere.)

Leave to the Nightingale her shady wood ;  
 A privacy of glorious light is thine,  
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood      15  
 Of harmony, with instinct more divine ;  
 Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam ;  
 True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.

---

 THE GREEN LINNET.

Beneath these fruit-tree boughs that shed  
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
 With brightest sunshine round me spread  
     Of spring's unclouded weather,  
 In this sequester'd nook how sweet      5  
 To sit upon my orchard-seat !  
 And flowers and birds once more to greet,  
     My last year's friends together.

One have I mark'd, the happiest guest  
 In all this covert of the blest :      10  
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest  
     In joy of voice and pinion !  
 Thou, Linnet ! in thy green array  
 Presiding spirit here to-day  
 Dost lead the revels of the May ;      15  
     And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,  
 Make all one band of paramours,  
 Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,  
     Art sole in thy employment ;      20  
 A Life, a Presence like the Air,  
 Scattering thy gladness without care,  
 Too blest with any one to pair ;  
     Thyself thy own enjoyment.

- Amid yon tuft of hazel trees 25  
 That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
 Behold him perch'd in ecstasies,  
     Yet seeming still to hover ;  
 There ! where the flutter of his wings  
 Upon his back and body flings 30  
 Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
     That cover him all over.
- My dazzled sight he oft deceives—  
 A brother of the dancing leaves ;  
 Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves 35  
     Pours forth his song in gushes ;  
 As if by that exulting strain  
 He mock'd and treated with disdain  
 The voiceless form he chose to feign,  
     While fluttering in the bushes. 40
- 

### TO THE CUCKOO.

O blithe New-comer ! I have heard,  
 I hear thee and rejoice :  
 O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,  
 Or but a wandering Voice ?

While I am lying on the grass 5  
 Thy twofold shout I hear ;  
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,  
 At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale  
 Of sunshine and of flowers, 10  
 Thou bringest unto me a tale  
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !  
 Even yet thou art to me  
 No Bird, but an invisible Thing, 15  
 A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my School-boy days  
 I listen'd to ; that Cry  
 Which made me look a thousand ways  
 In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove  
 Through woods and on the green ;  
 And thou wert still a hope, a love ;  
 Still long'd for, never seen !

And I can listen to thee yet ; 25  
 Can lie upon the plain  
 And listen, till I do beget  
 That golden time again.

O blesséd Bird ! the earth we pace  
 Again appears to be 30  
 An unsubstantial, faery place,  
 That is fit home for Thee !

---

TO THE DAISY. *written 1802.*

With little here to do or see  
 Of things that in the great world be,  
 Sweet Daisy ! oft I talk to thee  
     For thou art worthy,  
 Thou unassuming common-place 5  
 Of Nature, with that homely face,  
 And yet with something of a grace  
     Which Love makes for thee !

Oft on the dappled turf at ease  
 I sit and play with similes, 10  
 Loose types of things through all degrees,  
     Thoughts of thy raising ;  
 And many a fond and idle name  
 I give to thee, for praise or blame  
 As is the humour of the game, 15  
     While I am gazing.

A nun demure, of lowly port ;  
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,  
 In thy simplicity the sport  
     Of all temptations ; 20  
 A queen in crown of rubies drest ;  
 A starveling in a scanty vest ;  
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,  
     Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye 25  
 Staring to threaten and defy,  
 That thought comes next—and instantly  
     The freak is over,  
 The shape will vanish, and behold !  
 A silver shield with boss of gold 30  
 That spreads itself, some fairy bold  
     In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar—  
 And then thou art a pretty star,  
 Not quite so fair as many are 35  
     In heaven above thee !  
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—  
 May peace come never to his nest  
     Who shall reprove thee ! 40

Sweet Flower ! for by that name at last  
 When all my reveries are past  
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,  
     Sweet silent Creature !  
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,  
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
 My heart with gladness, and a share  
     Of thy meek nature !

45

---

TO A DISTANT FRIEND.

Why art thou silent ! Is thy love a plant  
 Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air  
 Of absence withers what was once so fair ?  
 Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant ?

Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant,  
 Bound to thy service with unceasing care—  
 The mind's least generous wish a mendicant  
 For nought but what thy happiness could spare.

5

Speak !—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold  
 A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,  
 Be left more desolate, more dreary cold

10

Than a forsaken bird's-nest fill'd with snow  
 'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—  
 Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know !

---

ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND, 1802.

Two Voices are there ; one is of the Sea,  
 One of the Mountains ; each a mighty voice :  
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty !



There came a tyrant, and with holy glee  
 Thou fought'st against him,—but hast vainly striven :  
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,  
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.

—Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft ;  
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left —  
 For, high-soul'd Maid, what sorrow would it be

That Mountain floods should thunder as before,  
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
 And neither awful Voice be heard by Thee !

---

LONDON, 1802.

Milton ! thou shouldst be living at this hour ;  
 England hath need of thee : she is a fen  
 Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,  
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men :  
 Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;  
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart :  
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,  
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free ;

So didst thou travel on life's common way  
 In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart  
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.





Grasmere.

## UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1803.

Earth has not anything to show more fair :  
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
 A sight so touching in its majesty :  
 This City now doth like a garment wear

The beauty of the morning : silent, bare, 5  
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie  
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky,—  
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep  
 In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill ; 10  
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !

The river glideth at his own sweet will :  
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;  
 And all that mighty heart is lying still !

---

 THE INNER VISION.

Most sweet it is with un-uplifted eyes  
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,  
 While a fair region round the traveller lies  
 Which he forbears again to look upon ;

Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene, 5  
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone  
 Of meditation, slipping in between  
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.

—If Thought and Love desert us, from that day  
 Let us break off all commerce with the Muse : 10  
 With Thought and Love companions of our way—

Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,—  
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews  
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

---

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1802.

O Friend! I know not which way I must look  
 For comfort, being, as I am, opprest  
 To think that now our life is only drest  
 For show ; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,  
 Or groom !—We must run glittering like a brook 5  
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest ;  
 The wealthiest man among us is the best :  
 No grandeur now in Nature or in book  
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense, 10  
 This is idolatry ; and these we adore :  
 Plain living and high thinking are no more :  
 The homely beauty of the good old cause  
 Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,  
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

---

TO SLEEP.

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by  
 One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees  
 Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,  
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;  
 I've thought of all by turns, and still I lie 5  
 Sleepless ; and soon the small birds' melodies  
 Must hear, first utter'd from my orchard trees,  
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.

Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,  
 And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth · 10  
 So do not let me wear to-night away :

Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ;  
 Come, blesséd barrier between day and day,  
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

## WITHIN KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,  
 With ill-match'd aims the Architect who plann'd  
 (Albeit labouring for a scanty band  
 Of white-robed Scholars only) this immense

And glorious work of fine intelligence ! 5  
 —Give all thou canst ; high Heaven rejects the lore  
 Of nicely-calculated less or more :—  
 So deem'd the man who fashion'd for the sense

These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof  
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells 10  
 Where light and shade repose, where music dwells

Lingering and wandering on as loth to die ;  
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof  
 That they were born for immortality.





# NOTES ON LONGFELLOW.

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## LITERATURE IN AMERICA.

One turns from English to American literature with a painful sense of loss. Cultivated literary men America has no doubt produced, elegant essayists and smooth versifiers, but scarcely one profound thinker or inspired poet. Her men of letters have chosen their profession from the same motives of profit or ambition as actuate their countrymen in general. As Longfellow, for example, frankly stated, they have seen in literature an opportunity of rising in the world. They more frequently possess talent and industry than imagination or genius, and their work accordingly, though often voluminous, scarcely ever rises above mediocrity, hardly even to the level of what would be considered mediocre work in more happily inspired men or times. Faithful translations, descriptive work like Irving's or Borroughs' overloaded with commonplace ruminations rather than reflections, literary criticism like Stedman's wasting itself in unprofitable discussions of form, or figurative and pretentious without real illumination, like Hudson's, second hand philosophies, moralizings in prose and verse and some middling novels are, if we except Emerson's truly inspired work, America's contribution to 19th century thought and art.

Frankly admitted by intelligent Americans, the comparative inferiority of American literature is accounted for and balanced by the greatness of their achievements along other lines. "The Literature of America," says Whipple, "is but an insufficient measure of the realized capacities of the American mind. Imagination in the popular mind is obstinately connected with poetry and romance, and when the attempt is made to extend the application of the creative energy of imagination to business and politics, the sentimental outcry becomes almost deafening. In fact it is the direction given to the creative faculty that discriminates between Fulton and Bryant, Whitney and Longfellow. It would be easy to show that in the conduct of the every-day transactions of life, more quickness of imagination, subtlety and breadth of understanding and energy of will have been displayed by our business men than by our authors. The nation out-values all its

authors even in respect to those powers which authors are supposed especially to represent. No one can write intelligently of the progress of American literature during the past hundred years without looking at American literature as generally subsidiary to the grand movement of the American mind."

Whipple's explanation has all the insinuating plausibility of a half-truth. It is true that ability and energy of the highest kind are required to organize and manage a great business or to carry on a government successfully. And yet we should be shy of laying the flattering unction to our souls that material success is a sufficient compensation for mediocrity in art and letters. It is not a question of ability but of spirit. Business is selfish. Politics at best is tinctured with charlatanism. Art and letters are disinterested, and just because disinterested, the highest measure of a people's civilization. Matthew Arnold lays down five conditions of civilization—expansion, conduct, science, beauty, manners. By expansion he means mainly material prosperity and political liberty. These are the basis on which civilization rests. A high civilization is of course impossible while the people are either living in squalid poverty or overtutored, overgoverned, sat upon. Material prosperity and political liberty are good, nay indispensable, but in themselves do not make civilization. A people can be truly called civilized only when its business and politics are regarded not as ends in themselves but as providing the conditions favorable to intellectual, moral and æsthetic development. It is in poetry especially that the sentiment of man's ideal life is to be found. In it are enshrined our noblest intimations. It keeps alive our sense of beauty and begets a divine dissatisfaction with the actual, which is the only true incentive to progress, and the nation, however splendid its material growth, that has not blossomed into first rate poetry has not attained to the highest plane of culture.

American life has been from the first almost entirely practical, material and utilitarian. In the severe struggle for existence against the sterner forces of nature, the noble puritanism of the early settlers degenerated into bigotry and grotesqueness. Preoccupation with material things became more and more marked, and the range of thought and spiritual experience narrowed, while a superstitious and mechanical routine misnamed religion prevailed. The revolutionary struggle and the war of 1812 should have quickened the spiritual life of the nation, but, unfortunately, an imported fatalism and moral indifference incidental to the disappointed revolutionary hopes in France crossing the Atlan-

tic and reinforcing a native growth of like origin, threatened to swamp all nobler feeling. The opportunities for wealth afforded by the opening up of a continent and the development of machinery enabled the people to throw off this morbid influence, but their whole energies seemed absorbed in the race for fortune. Against this, many philanthropic, social and literary influences contended, and with some apparent success. The democratic constitution of the state was firmly established. Slavery was abolished. The treatment of criminals became more rational and humane, and the questions of temperance, public health, education and woman's rights were forced upon the attention of legislators. Old customs and prejudices lost their hold. The American temper became more cheerful, more good-natured, saner, less conventional, more emancipated from the trammels of tradition than that of any other people. But so completely had the ideal of the average sensual man—the ideal of comfort and amusement—become the ideal of the whole, that Emerson's phrase for his own dearly loved country is "great, intelligent, sensual, avaricious America."

It is to "the hardness and materialism of America, her want of soul and delicacy, her exaggeration and boastfulness and the absence of the discipline of respect," that her literary mediocrity is due. Matthew Arnold has told us that the flowering time for literature and art is when there is a national glow of thought and feeling. Without this only two or three courses are open to the man of letters. He may be a voice crying in the wilderness, entering his scornful protest against the practical tendencies of the time. Like Whitman he may look into the future and see the nobler civilization, for which the great materialistic movement of the present prepares the way. He may develop his technique and, like Eugene Field and a score of others, become the conventionalized vehicle of platitudes. He may seek refuge from the unspiritual present in the past or the remote. Longfellow chose the latter. In the actual movements of his time he had little interest. The spiritual problems which were beginning to perplex men he never faced, falling back upon a sort of fading and attenuated puritanism. Tired of the broad glare of American business and industrial activity, he sought relief in mediæval legend and old-world sentiment, or, as in *Evangeline*, in the contemplation of a fancy picture of idyllic happiness under simple primitive conditions, rudely broken in upon by our aggressive Anglo-Saxon civilization, yet exhibiting in its eclipse the power of the simple, primary instincts and affections, as Wordsworth says, "to make a thing endurable which else would upset the brain or break the heart."

## BIOGRAPHY.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807-1882) was born in Portland, Maine, on Feb. 27th, 1807. He came on both sides of good New England stock. His mother, Zilpha Wadsworth, was descended from a John Alden and a Priscilla Mullens (the original of the Priscilla of *Miles Standish*) who came over together in the "Mayflower," and his father from a William Longfellow who, about sixty years later immigrating from Hampshire, England, settled also in Massachusetts. Neither the Wadsworths nor the Longfellows were distinguished in early colonial history, but at the revolution both families had begun to be prominent. The poet's maternal grandfather, Peleg Wadsworth, of Portland, Maine, was a general in the continental army, while the other, Stephen Longfellow, was a judge of the common pleas in the same town. The poet's father, also named Stephen, was a lawyer, a graduate of Harvard and, though not possessed of much originality, a refined, scholarly and religious man who made the education of his children his chief care. His mother—a typical product of transatlantic puritanism—knew little but her Bible and psalm-book, but was esteemed by all as a woman of sweet and fervent piety. To her the poet owed his handsome features and gentle disposition, and to the culture and strongly moral atmosphere of his home, his delicacy of taste, sensitiveness, moralizing temper, and indifference to the glow and passion of life.

His boyhood was spent mostly in his native town, where he grew up a slender, studious youth with an aversion to sport and rude forms of exercise. His favorite books were Cowper's poems, Lalla Rookh, Ossian, the Arabian Nights, Don Quixote, and Irving's Sketch Book. Nature was not, however, wholly unvital or nonsuggestive. It was impossible that some of the most beautiful bay and island scenery in the world should not leave a deposit of impression for future years, and some of the best of his subsequent poetic work—*My Lost Youth*, *The Rope Walk*, and *Keramos*—record the treasured memories of his native town and its surroundings.

In 1822, at the age of fifteen, he entered Bowdoin College, at Brunswick, Maine, a town situated near the romantic falls of the Androscoggin, about twenty-five miles from Portland, and in a region full of beautiful scenery and rich in Indian legend. Among his classmates were several men of subsequent note, including Abbott the historian and Hawthorne the novelist. Some twenty poems written during these years and contributed to the *United States' Literary Gazette*, while show-





*Mr. Longfellow's Birthplace, Portland.*





ing little originality of thought or fancy are graceful and not unmusical. They are interesting, however, chiefly as making clear the influence of his visit to Europe upon Longfellow's mind. Though not the work of the genuine lover of nature, but of one who views the world through the eyes of his favorite authors, these college poems are at least free from the mystical and supernatural view of nature which his residence in Europe imparted to much of his subsequent work. He graduated with high honors in 1825, and remained for some time at college as a tutor, subsequently entering his father's law office.

His capacity and tastes unfitting him for law, there came the opportune offer of the chair of modern languages in his Alma Mater, due, it is said, to one of the trustees having been very much taken with his translation on his final examination of an ode of Horace.

To qualify for this appointment he travelled and studied for three years and a half in England, France, Germany, Holland, Spain and Italy, making the acquaintance at Madrid of Washington Irving, then engaged on his life of Columbus. Though no doubt of great benefit to the professor of modern languages, to the poet this visit to Europe was of very doubtful advantage. Longfellow was at the plastic age of twenty. His knowledge of the languages and literature he had been called upon to teach was no doubt perfected, his sympathies widened, his poetic themes multiplied, and his confidence in himself increased; but his mind was "traditionalized" and "mysticized." A pietist and mediæval reaction against the so-called atheism of Byron and Shelley, and the classic paganism of Goethe, was sweeping over Europe. Steeped in the rising tide of traditional beliefs and sentimentality, it was not until the very close of his life that Longfellow began to free himself from the fetters of tradition and mysticism, and to see the life of man and nature as it really is.

Assuming his duties at Bowdoin in 1829, he taught there for six years with eminent success. In 1831 he married one of his "early loves," Mary S. Potter. Two years later he published first, a translation from the Spanish of *Coplas de Manrique* with an introductory essay on the poetry of Spain; and *Outre Mer*, a youthfully enthusiastic book of travels containing some translations from the French. Obviously imitative of both Irving and Goldsmith, and full of commonplace moralizings, the book is now devoid of interest, though very popular at the time of publication.

Chosen in 1835 to succeed Ticknor as professor of modern languages at Harvard, Longfellow paid a second visit of some fifteen months to

Europe, devoting his time principally to Scandinavia and Switzerland. At Rotterdam his wife died, the "being beauteous" commemorated in the *Footsteps of Angels*. At Heidelberg he made the acquaintance of Bryant and at Interlaken the lady who subsequently became his wife, Miss Frances Appleton.

At Cambridge, after his return from Europe in 1836, and amid surroundings entirely congenial, Longfellow began to lecture and write. Several essays appeared in the *North American Review* during the two succeeding years, and in 1839 appeared his first volume of original poems entitled *Voices of the Night*, and containing among others, *A Psalm of Life*, *Footsteps of Angels*, *The Reaper and the Flowers*, *Midnight Mass*, and *The Beleaguered City*; and *Hyperion*, a prose romance in which under the names of Paul Flemming and Mary Ashburton he portrayed with questionable delicacy his meeting with Miss Appleton at Interlaken. A second volume of poems appeared in 1841, under the title of *Ballads and other Poems*, and including *The Skeleton in Armour*, *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, *The Village Blacksmith*, *To a Child*, *The Bridge*, and *Excelsior*.

The following summer was spent in England and on the Rhine. The return voyage saw the composition of the poems on slavery, of which *The Slave's Dream* and *The Quadroon* made a decided impression on publication. In 1843 he married Miss Appleton, the Mary Ashburton of *Hyperion*, taking up his abode in the Craigie House, an old revolutionary mansion once occupied by George Washington, which had been bought and presented to the young couple by Miss Appleton's father, and which continued to be the poet's residence till his death. Lectures on Dante, illustrated by admirable translations, seem to have been the literary sensation of the time, and were long remembered, says James Russell Lowell, with gratitude by those who were thus led to "the deeper significance of the great Christian poet." *The Spanish Student*, a kind of sentimental morality followed, "without any special merit except good intention." In 1845 *The Poets of Europe*, a collection of translations edited by Longfellow was published, and about the same time some original songs and sonnets under the title of *The Belfry of Bruges*. Two years later was written the poem upon which his poetic reputation rests, *Evangeline, a Tale of Acadie*. *Kavanagh*, a novel, and a volume of poems entitled *Seaside and Fireside*, including *Resignation*, and *The Song of the Ship*, appeared in 1849; in 1851 the *Golden Legend*, based upon a German story of self-sacrifice, and bringing his imagination back to America he applied himself, having resigned his



Craigie House, Cambridge.





professorship, to the elaboration of an Indian legend ; and in 1855 he gave to the public *The Song of Hiawatha*, an attempt imitative, both in subject and in metre, of the Finnish epic the *Kalevala*, to restore the fading colors of the Indian tradition. *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, based upon a charming episode in colonial history in which the poet's ancestress Priscilla figured, appeared in 1858 along with a number of minor poems, one of which is *My Lost Youth*, included under the title *Birds of Passage*.

The tragic fate of his wife, who having accidentally set her dress on fire was burned to death in her own home in 1861, was a shock from which the poet never quite recovered. In one only of his subsequent poems does he venture to allude to it, in the sonnet namely beginning with the line :

In the long sleepless watches of the night.

In 1863 appeared *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, obviously suggested by the *Canterbury Tales* and a second flight of his *Birds of Passage*. *Flower de Luce*, in 1866, contained among other things of considerable merit a poem on the burial of Hawthorne and *The Bells of Lynn*. Seeking refuge once more in mediæval life, he completed and issued in 1867 his translation begun thirty years before of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, a masterpiece of literal translation. A triumphal visit to Europe in 1868, when Universities and great ones conspired to honor him, was followed on his return by the publication of *New England Tragedies*, and in 1871 of *The Divine Tragedy*. From time to time he continued to give fresh work to the world, *Three Books of Song* in 1872, *Aftermath* in 1874, *The Hanging of the Crane* and *The Masque of Pandora and other poems* in 1875, *Keramos* and other poems in 1878, *Poems of Places* in the same year and *Ultima Thule*, meant to be his last work, in 1880, followed however in 1887 by a touching sonnet on the death of General Garfield, and *Hermes Trismegistus*, which he left unfinished. Perhaps the most significant feature of these later poems is their growing conviction that the riddle of existence is not solved by any of the traditional formulæ, their perceptibly diminishing romanticism and mystical feeling, and their increasing appreciation of pagan naturalism and classic calm. His health during the winter of 1881-82 had been infirm, but no serious alarm was felt by his family till March 20th. On March 24th he died, passing gently away. Two days later, Sunday March 26th, 1882, he was laid in Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.



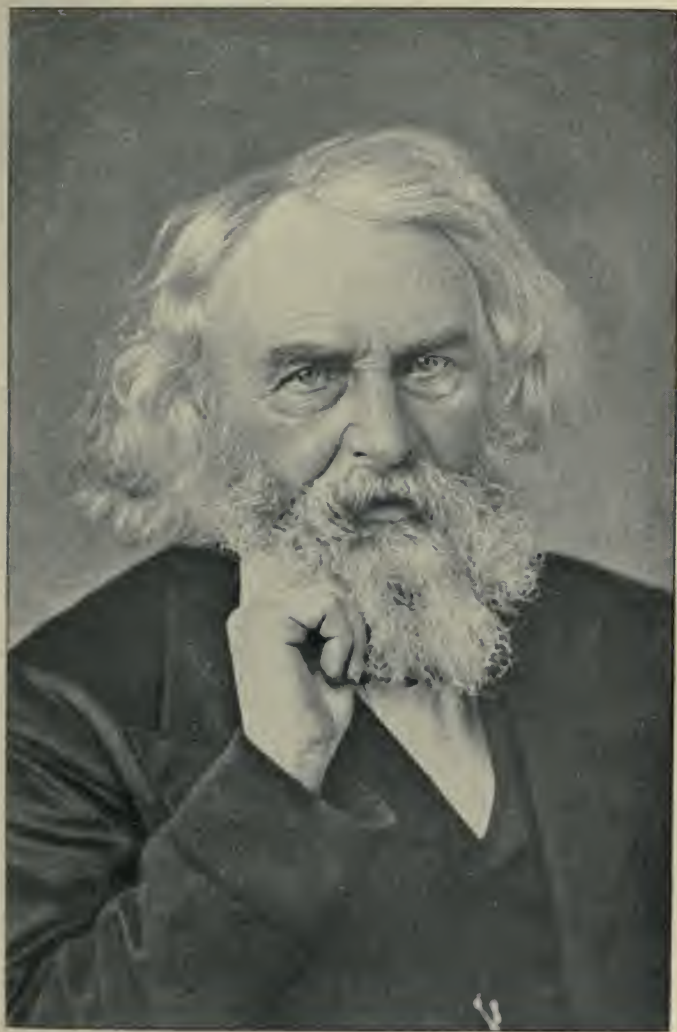
### Chronological List of Longfellow's Chief Works as Published.

Coplas de Manrique (translation).....	1833
Outre-Mer (travels).....	1835
Hyperion (prose romance).....	1839
Voices of the Night.....	1839
Ballads and other Poems.....	1841
Poems on Slavery.....	1842
Spanish Student (drama).....	1843
Poets and Poetry of Europe.....	1845
Belfry of Bruges.....	1846
Evangeline.....	1847
Kavanagh (prose romance.....)	1849
Seaside and Fireside.....	1850
Golden Legend (dramatic poem).....	1851
Hiawatha.....	1855
Miles Standish.....	1858
Tales of a Wayside Inn.....	1863
Flower-De-Luce.....	1866
Divine Comedy of Dante (translation).....	1867-70
New England Tragedies.....	1868
Divine Tragedy.....	1871
Christus.....	1872
Aftermath.....	1874
Hanging of the Crane.....	1875
Masque of Pandora.....	1875
Kéramos.....	1878
Ultima Thule.....	1880
In the Harbour (Ultima Thule, Pt. II.).....	1882
Michael Angelo (dramatic fragment).....	1884

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### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MAN.

The poet's personal appearance and character are thus described by one of his enthusiastic biographers: "In person Longfellow was rather below middle height, broad shouldered, and well built. His head and face were extremely handsome, his forehead broad and high, his eyes full of clear, warming fire, his nose straight and graceful, his chin and lips rich and full of feeling, as those of the Praxitelian Hermes, and his



*Henry W. Longfellow.*



voice low, melodious and full of tender cadences. His hair, originally dark, became, in his later years, silvery white, and its wavy locks combined with those of his flowing beard to give him that leonine appearance so familiar through his later portraits. Charles Kingsley said of Longfellow's face that it was the most beautiful human face he had ever seen.

“As a man, Longfellow was almost perfect, as much so as it is ever given to human nature to be. A man in intellect and courage, yet without conceit or bravado; a woman in sensibility and tenderness, yet without shrinking or weakness; a saint in purity of life and devotion of heart, yet without asceticism or religiosity; a knight-errant in hatred of wrong and contempt of baseness, yet without self-righteousness or cynicism; a prince in dignity and courtesy, yet without formality or condescension; a poet in thought and feeling, yet without jealousy or affectation; a scholar in tastes and habits, yet without aloofness or bookishness; a dutiful son, a loving husband, a judicious father, a trusty friend, a useful citizen, and an enthusiastic patriot—he united in his strong, transparent humanity almost every virtue under heaven. A thoroughly healthy, well-balanced, harmonious nature, accepting life as it came, with all its joys and sorrows, living it beautifully and hopefully, without canker and without uncharity. No man ever lived more completely in the light than Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

“Perhaps the most remarkable traits in Longfellow's character were his accessibility and his charity. Though a great worker, he seemed always to have time for anything he was asked to do. He was never too busy to see a caller, to answer a letter, or to assist by word or deed any one that needed assistance. His courtesy to all visitors, even to strangers and children who called to look at him, or who, not venturing to call, hung upon his garden gate to catch a glimpse of him, was almost a marvel. He always took it for granted that they had come to see Washington's study, and accordingly took the greatest interest in showing them that. He never, as long as he could write, was known to refuse his autograph, and so far was he from trying to protect himself from intruders that he rarely drew the blinds of his study windows at night, though that study was on the ground-floor, and faced the street. His acts of charity, though performed in secret, were neither few nor small. Of him it may be said with perfect truth, ‘he went about doing good’; and not with his money merely, but also with his presence and encouragement. To how many sad hearts did he come like an angel,

with the rich tones of his voice waking harmonies of hope where before had been despair and silence? How many young literary people, disappointed at the unsuccess of their first attempts, did he comfort and spur on to renewed and higher efforts. How careful he was to quench no smoking flax! How utterly free he was from jealousy and revengefulness! While poor, morbid Edgar Allen Poe was writing violent and scurrilous articles upon him, accusing him of plagiarism and other literary misdemeanours, he was delivering enthusiastic lectures to his classes on Poe's poetry."

His daughter, Alice M. Longfellow, gives the following account of her father's home life :

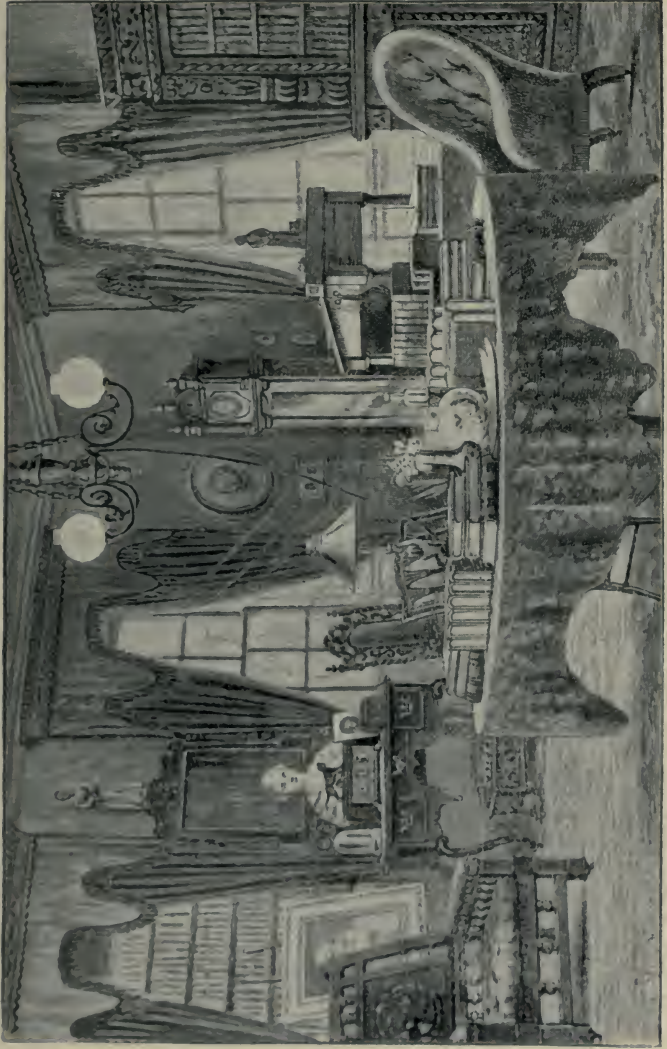
"Many people are full of poetry without, perhaps, recognizing it, because they have no power of expression. Some have, unfortunately, full power of expression, with no depth or richness of thought or character behind it. With Mr. Longfellow, there was complete unity and harmony between his life and character and the outward manifestation of this in his poetry. It was not worked out from his brain, but was the blossoming of his inward life.

"His nature was thoroughly poetic and rhythmical, full of delicate fancies and thoughts. Even the ordinary details of existence were invested with charm and thoughtfulness. There was really no line of demarcation between his life and his poetry. One blended into the other, and his daily life was poetry in its truest sense. The rhythmical quality showed itself in an exact order and method, running through every detail. This was not the precision of a martinet; but anything out of place distressed him, as did a faulty rhyme or defective metre.

"His library was carefully arranged by subjects, and, although no catalogue was ever made, he was never at a loss where to look for any needed volume. His books were deeply beloved and tenderly handled. Beautiful bindings were a great delight, and the leaves were cut with the utmost care and neatness. Letters and bills were kept in the same orderly manner. The latter were paid as soon as rendered, and he always personally attended to those in the neighbourhood. An unpaid bill weighed on him like a nightmare. Letters were answered day by day, as they accumulated, although it became often a weary task. He never failed, I think, to keep his account books accurately, and he also used to keep the bank books of the servants in his employment, and to help them with their accounts.

"Consideration and thoughtfulness for others were strong characteristics with Mr. Longfellow. He, indeed, carried it too far, and became





*The Study, Craigie House.*





almost a prey to those he used to call the 'total strangers,' whose demands for time and help were constant. Fortunately he was able to extract much interest and entertainment from the different types of humanity that were always coming on one pretext or another, and his genuine sympathy and quick sense of humour saved the situation from becoming too wearing. This constant drain was, however, very great. His unselfishness and courtesy prevented him from showing the weariness of spirit he often felt, and many valuable hours were taken out of his life by those with no claim, and no appreciation of what they were doing.

"In addition to the 'total strangers' was a long line of applicants for aid of every kind. 'His house was known to all the vagrant train,' and to all he was equally genial and kind. There was no change of voice or manner in talking with the humblest member of society; and I am inclined to think the kindly chat in Italian with the organ-grinder and the little old woman peddler, or the discussions with the old Irish gardener, were quite as full of pleasure as more important conversations with travellers from Europe.

"One habit Mr. Longfellow always kept up. Whenever he saw in a newspaper any pleasant notice of friends or acquaintances, a review of a book, or a subject in which they were interested, he cut it out, and kept the scraps in an envelope addressed to the person, and mailed them when several had accumulated.

"He was a great foe to procrastination, and believed in attending to everything without delay. In connection with this I may say, that when he accepted the invitation of his classmates to deliver a poem at Bowdoin College on the fiftieth anniversary of their graduation, he at once devoted himself to the work, and the poem was finished several months before the time. During these months he was ill with severe neuralgia, and if it had not been for this habit of early preparation the poem would probably never have been written or delivered.

"Society and hospitality meant something quite real to Mr. Longfellow. I cannot remember that there were ever any formal or obligatory occasions of entertainment. All who came were made welcome without any special preparation, and without any thought of personal inconvenience.

"Mr. Longfellow's knowledge of foreign languages brought to him travellers from every country,—not only literary men, but public men and women of every kind, and, during the stormy days of European politics, great numbers of foreign patriots exiled for their liberal

opinions. As one Englishman pleasantly remarked, 'There are no ruins in your country to see Mr. Longfellow, and so we thought we would come to see you.'

"Mr. Longfellow was a true lover of peace in every way, and held war in absolute abhorrence, as well as the taking of life in any form. He was strongly opposed to capital punishment, and was filled with indignation at the idea of men finding sport in hunting and killing dumb animals. At the same time he was quickly stirred by any story of wrong and oppression, and ready to give a full measure of help and sympathy to any one struggling for freedom and liberty of thought and action.

"With political life, as such, Mr. Longfellow was not in full sympathy, in spite of his life-long friendship with Charles Sumner. That is to say, the principles involved deeply interested him, but the methods displeased him. He felt that the intense absorption in one line of thought prevented a full development, and was an enemy to many of the most beautiful and important things in life. He considered that his part was to cast his weight with what seemed to him the best elements in public life, and he never omitted the duty of expressing his opinion by his vote. He always went to the polls the first thing in the morning on election day, and let nothing interfere with this. He used to say laughingly that he still belonged to the Federalists.

"Mr. Longfellow came to Cambridge to live in 1837, when he was thirty years old. He was at that time professor of literature in Harvard College, and occupied two rooms in the old house then owned by the widow Craigie, formerly Washington's Headquarters. In this same old house he passed the remainder of his life, being absent only one year in foreign travel. Home had great attractions for him. He cared more for the quiet and repose, the companionship of his friends and books, than for the fatigues and adventures of new scenes. Many of the friends of his youth were the friends of old age, and to them his house was always open with a warm welcome.

"Mr. Longfellow was always full of reserve, and never talked much about himself or his work, even to his family. Sometimes a volume would appear in print, without his having mentioned its preparation. In spite of his general interest in people, only a few came really close to his life. With these he was always glad to go over the early days passed together, and to consult with them about literary work.

"The lines descriptive of the Student in the *Wayside Inn* might apply to Mr. Longfellow as well :—

“A youth was there, of quiet ways,  
A Student of old books and days,  
To whom all tongues and lands were known,  
And yet a lover of his own ;  
With many a social virtue graced,  
And yet a friend of solitude ;  
A man of such a genial mood  
The heart of all things he embraced,  
And yet of such fastidious taste,  
He never found the best too good.”

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## CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS POETRY.

Longfellow's poetry reveals no new meaning in nature, no fresh spring of hope in man. His religion was a sort of attenuated puritanism. Rejecting some of the earlier dogmatic trammels he remained content with the ordinary Christian explanation and quite indifferent to any of the more recent guesses at the riddle of existence. His creed has been summed up as “a child-like trust in God and resignation to His will.” His feeling for nature was but an echo of that mystical or romantic view current in Germany in the earlier part of the century and appearing so strikingly also in Carlyle—the view that nature is a garment concealing while it reveals forms of unfathomable beauty. Longfellow could hear “the trailing garments of the night sweep through her marble halls” and see “the stars come out and listen to the music of the seas,” and this remained his attitude almost till the end of his life. Of Wordsworth's simple natural truth he had none. His treatment of human emotion was equally superficial. Love for example, as he conceives of it, differs equally from the passion and the spiritual exaltation of other poets. It is merely a closer and more permanent friendship, by preference the crown of a life-long acquaintance. The inner conflict of the spirit, in which such writers as George Eliot delight, had no interest for him, while he shrank from the portrayal of the darker passions and the more repulsive realities. His themes are such aspects of nature as easily lend themselves to mystical or moral reflections, heroic deeds preserved in history or legend, and tender or pathetic incidents in life. For records of human devotion and self-sacrifice he had a special fondness, “whether they were monkish legends, Indian tales or American history.” Of such themes, it has been said that Longfellow could see every minutest beauty and extract every poetic grace. This, Matthew Arnold would call a personal

estimate, the estimate of a man biased by his personal obligations to the poet. What Longfellow gives us is the observations and reflections on a narrow range of interests, of a man of tender feeling and refined scholarly tastes. Deficient in humor and unable to put himself dramatically at another's point of view, his work is wholly subjective, a mere repetition of himself. His words have no dynamic power. Fewer effective quotations are obtainable from Longfellow's poetry than from any other writer of similar volume. His want of imagination he tries to make good by a fertility of fancy, but his search for similes becomes at last very tiresome. His popularity is mainly owing to the uncritical temper of the poetry-reading public. Like Andrew Lang, the people ask only for nepenthe, to be made to forget a world in which husbands ill-treat their wives and fathers their children, and where the rascal triumphs at the expense of the honest man. Longfellow has two strings to his bow. In his sermon poems he voices the moral ideas of the middle classes, while in the tender sentiment of his other poems they find relief from their hard utilitarian and practical life.

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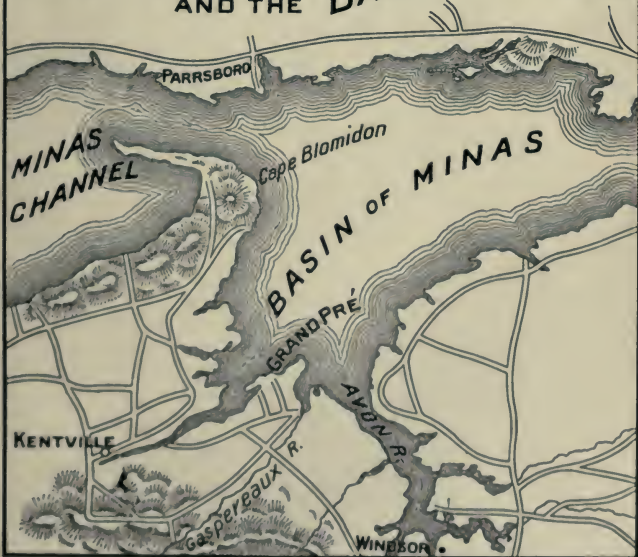
### EVANGELINE.

**HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.**—Acadie, from an Indian word meaning place, which also appears in Passamaquoddy, was the name given to the region in which the Frenchman De Monts, in 1604, planted the colony of Port Royal. In 1620 the English, who had long claimed the territory in virtue of Cabot's discovery in 1497, took possession of Acadia, and a Scotch Colony took the place of the French Colony at Port Royal, hence the name Nova Scotia. In 1632 the country was restored to France. Under Cromwell the French were again driven out, to be again reinstated in 1667. Finally in 1713 the country was ceded to Great Britain by the treaty of Utrecht, and has since that time remained a British possession. Previous to 1749 the inhabitants of the province were almost entirely of French origin, occupying for the most part the district in the neighborhood of Minas Basin. After the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 had confirmed the title of the English to the province, additional English settlements began to be made, and in 1749 the City of Halifax was founded. Henceforward it became the chief care of the English-speaking inhabitants of Nova Scotia to protect the peninsula against possible reconquest by the French in Canada; and in 1755, in view of the possibility of a general outbreak of hostilities,





## MAP OF ACADIA AND THE BASIN OF MINAS







General Lawrence, Governor of Nova Scotia, deemed it advisable to take possession of the disputed territory about the isthmus of Chignecto, upon which the French and English had already erected forts. The capture of the French fort, Beau Séjour, promised also to remove a constant source of annoyance to his province, for, acting from this centre the French had not ceased, to incite the Acadians to rebellion and to foster among them a spirit of disloyalty to the British Crown. Under the directions of General Lawrence of Nova Scotia, therefore, troops were raised in Massachusetts who should co-operate with a small body of British regulars to secure the reduction of Beau Séjour. The expedition was successful, and Moncton, commanding the regulars, with Winslow and Scott, commanding the volunteers, succeeded in clearing the isthmus of the French.

The capture of Fort Beau Séjour, however, by no means assured the safety of the English in Nova Scotia; for the government at Halifax had good reason to believe that in the event of an attempt, which was almost certain to be made by the French, to regain possession of Acadia, the Acadians would throw in their lot with their fellow-countrymen. They were considered, therefore, as a standing menace to British occupation of the province; so much so that Governor Lawrence considered it necessary at this juncture to take timely steps to prevent aid being given to the enemy from that quarter, should the anticipated conflict take place. The Acadians had in 1730, though very reluctantly, taken an oath of allegiance to the British crown, although in a form so strongly modified as to impose practically no restraint upon them. In the summer of 1755, therefore, the inhabitants of Grand Pré and other Acadian settlements were called upon to take an unconditional oath of fidelity to the British crown. Numerous opportunities were given to them to comply with the demand, but on every occasion they flatly refused to do so, even in the face of the threat that in the event of their refusal they would in all probability be dispossessed of their lands. "Their rejection of it," says Parkman, "reiterated in full view of the consequences, is to be ascribed partly to a fixed belief that the English would not execute their threats, partly to ties of race and kin, but mainly to superstition. They feared to take part with the heretics against the King of France, whose cause, as already stated, they had been taught to regard as one with the cause of God: they were constrained by the dread of perdition."

When all efforts to induce them to take the oath had failed, it was determined by the council at Halifax, that in the interest of self-

preservation they should be immediately dispossessed of their land, deported from Acadia and distributed among the other British provinces. Accordingly in August of the same year, 1755, Winslow, with the volunteers under his command, was despatched to Grand Pré with orders to carry out the commands of the council in that district, while other officers did likewise in other Acadian settlements. Having arrived at Grand Pré, Winslow issued a proclamation to all the male inhabitants of the district, demanding their attendance at the church on the fifth of the month, in order that the King's will regarding them might be made known. On the day appointed, four hundred and sixteen males assembled in the church, and Winslow read to them the proclamation of the council announcing their fate, and concluded by declaring them prisoners in the name of the King. Deportation began one month later; but it was not until the end of December that the work was finally completed. During the preparations for their removal they were granted as much freedom as possible, and in deporting them, care was taken that the inhabitants of the same village, and more particularly members of the same family, should not be separated. Nevertheless it is certain that in a few cases such separation did take place. According to Parkman, from the district of Grand Pré alone, more than two thousand people were thus deported; while from the whole of the province the number exceeded six thousand. A large number of the exiles found new homes in Louisiana, while not a few eventually made their way back to Acadie, where, after the peace, they were allowed to settle without molestation. It was fully five years before the lands of which the Acadians were dispossessed, were finally occupied by new settlers of British stock.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.—In the story of *Evangeline*, Longfellow found a theme peculiarly suited to his own poetic genius. The light melancholy of the story is in keeping with his prevailing mood, while his characteristic hopefulness and cheerfulness finds sufficient opportunities for display. The constant change of scene throughout the poem is, moreover, favorable to his idyllic method, and his fondness for portraiture of the picturesque.

But although the element of beauty in the story of *Evangeline* is of itself sufficient justification of its choice as a subject of poetic treatment, nevertheless it is characteristic of Longfellow that he should endeavor to make the poem incidentally convey some moral truth. This he has done in *Evangeline* in the precepts of Father Felician, which are carried into practice by *Evangeline*, and emphasized by the poet at the conclusion of the story:—

“ Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted ;  
If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning  
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment ;  
That which the fountain sends forth, returns again to the fountain.  
Patience ; accomplish thy labor ; accomplish thy work of affection !  
Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike,  
Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the heart is made godlike,  
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven ! ”

In examining the poem in regard to its artistic qualities, it will be noticed that the poet has idealized the story, purged it of all its disagreeable elements, and presented only the beautiful. A brief glance at the setting of the story will reveal to us the method by which he has secured this result. The scene of the poem is placed not only in the poetic past, but among a people whose simple, primitive mode of life suggests a much earlier age than that in which they actually lived. The impression of remoteness is strengthened by skilful references to the early life of their ancestry in Normandy, by the constant succession of pictures of primeval forests and wildernesses, and above all by the simple and childlike character of the Acadian people. It will be noted also that in the choice of material for his similes, he has recourse to the simple phenomena of nature. Especially striking, however, are the series of scriptural references, which, besides giving additional emphasis to the idea of primitiveness, give an added dignity, and are in keeping with the tone of seriousness which characterizes the story. The mind of the reader is at no point vexed with the intrusion of references to the disagreeable facts of the modern busy world.

*Evangeline* has a distinctly American flavor. The constant reference to wild, uncultivated, trackless regions, to the intricate mazes of never-ending bayous, to Indian, hunter and planter, to American vegetation and American bird-life, to Indian summer, to mixture of race and mingling of tongues, to the mysterious vastness of the great new world in the west, removes the reader at once out of the region of old world idyll and romance.

In the matter of plot *Evangeline* is peculiarly simple. No sub-plot is introduced which might for a moment detract the reader's attention from the bare pathos of *Evangeline's* lot. Indeed only such details are introduced as serve in some way to bring into relief the single emotion of the poem. For instance, the description of their childhood's companionship adds materially to the bitterness of separation. The death of Benedict serves to make the figure of *Evangeline* more solitary. The one brief glimpse of Gabriel too, “weary with waiting, unhappy and

restless," intensifies the reader's sympathy for *Evangeline*. "There is but one figure whom we follow," says Stedman, "that one the most touching of all, the betrothed *Evangeline* searching for her lover, through weary years and over half an unknown world."

METRE.—*Hermann and Dorothea*, in which Goethe depicted the sufferings of the Lutherans expelled from Salzburg, gave Longfellow many suggestions for the development of his Acadian story, and among others, that of metrical form. The measure of *Evangeline* is the English dactylic hexameter. The classical hexameter as used by Homer in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and Virgil in the *Aeneid* was based on quantity. It contained five dactylic feet and one spondee. The dactyls contained one long and two short syllables, and the concluding spondee two long syllables. The English dactylic hexameter is based on accent, and contains five feet composed of one accented, followed by two unaccented, syllables, and one trochee. The metre has never been very popular in English, largely on account of the dearth of spondees. Many writers, however, have tried their hands at it, including Kingsley and Clough. It was the success of the measure in Clough's hand that largely determined Longfellow's choice. Often, indeed, the poet errs, his lines become unmusical; but on the whole he has succeeded very happily in making the measure reflect the lingering melancholy of the poem. The charm of the measure of *Evangeline* is the gentle labor of the former half of the line, and the gentle acceleration of the latter half.

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## PRELUDE.

It is usual in narrative poetry to begin with an introduction stating the main theme of the poem. Following literary traditions, poets in all ages have thrown this into the form of an invocation to the muse or other patron spirit. The opening lines of Homer's *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, or of Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, are well-known examples. Longfellow's introduction has been greatly admired. Dropping the customary invocation, he carries us at once to the primeval forest along the Northern Atlantic. It is twilight, and the sighing of the wind in the pines and the hemlocks, and the hoarse sound of the incoming tide are in melancholy harmony. With intentional ambiguity he allows us for an instant to think that forest and ocean are mourning the disappearance of the red-men before the whites, only to fix our attention more firmly on the fate of the Acadian farmers.



From the fate of a community he passes to the pathetic experiences of an individual, and from the melancholy thought that nature remains, while man and his transient joys and sorrows pass away, to the more inspiring thoughts of the enduring beauty and strength of woman's devotion.

1. **This.** The reader is carried in imagination to Acadia.

**forest primeval.** A forest untouched by the axe. This was not strictly true of the Acadian forest even in Longfellow's time.

2. **Bearded with moss.** Not true of Nova Scotia forests and inconsistent with the fertility ascribed to the pleasant valley. Where the mean summer heat is insufficient to ripen the ordinary grains, as towards James' Bay in Northern Ontario, the dwarfed trees are festooned with moss, but no one has ever seen, in the agricultural portions of the province, anything that would justify the poet's picture.

**garments of green.** Alliteration or the rhyming of initial sounds is one of the characteristic musical devices of this poem. Has the color anything to do with the choice of the following image?

**twilight.** Why does the poet choose to view the scene at the close of day? This raises another question: What is the season? Note that deciduous trees are not mentioned.

3. **Druids.** The priests, bards and lawgivers of ancient Gaul and Britain. The word is supposed to be derived from *δρυς*, an oak, their temples having been consecrated groves of that tree. Some have thought that the choice of image was governed by the analogy between the Celts and the Acadians, both of whom were to disappear before a stronger power. The difficulty with this view is that while the Druids were also Celts and disappeared with their race, the forest remains. The comparison, in other words, does not go on all fours unless we are to suppose that the forest stands to the Acadians, these simple children of nature, in the same relation as the Druids did to the Celts, and is lamenting the fate in which it and the Acadians are alike involved, namely, to disappear before the all-absorbing, forest-felling Anglo-Saxon. Caesar and Matthew Arnold both refer to the belief in immortality as the characteristic feature of the Druid religion. Does the poet intend these evergreens—notice that the reference is only to the pines and the hemlocks—to symbolize something eternal which pities man's brief and troubled course, as Tennyson makes the yew, also an evergreen, the symbol of some eternal principle in nature which mocks man's sorrows and sufferings:

Old yew that graspest at the stones  
 That name the underlying dead ;  
 Thy fibres net the dreamless head,  
 Thy roots are wrapped about the bones.

Here also the difficulty presents itself that if any such hopeful view was intended the forest might have been represented as sad, but not disconsolate. As parallelism is one of the characteristics of the poem we may be pretty sure that the thought is practically repeated in "stand like harpers hoar," etc., and that Longfellow was attracted only by some external resemblance between the pines and the hemlocks and the ancient Druids, and had no intention of pressing it.

**eld.** Olden time, antiquity. An archaic word generally meaning old age.

**prophetic.** This word has two forces, "to declare" and "to declare beforehand." The latter is the sense in which the word is generally used. The former is the sense in which it is used here.

**4. harpers hoar.** See Scott's description of an ancient harper, in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* :

The way was long, the wind was cold,  
 The minstrel was infirm and old,  
 His withered cheek, and tresses gay  
 Seemed to have seen a better day ;

**5. Loud from its rocky caverns.** "The Bay of Fundy, 180 miles long by 35 wide, lies in the direction of the great tidal wave. Its tides are consequently very fierce, rising to a height of 70 feet."

**6. answers.** Predicate of "wail."

**8. roe.** A species of deer. Develop the comparison. Does the figure of the startled roe suggest the tragedy of the story?

**9. thatch-roofed.** Is there any authority for the Acadians' use of thatch? In a wooded country such a clinging to ancestral customs is quite inexplicable. English and French settlers in Upper and Lower Canada, though used to thatch at home, quickly adopted shingles or slabs as roofing material.

10-11. Develop the simile.

**15. Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand Pré.** The village was situated (see map) on Minas Basin, near the mouth of the Gaspereau and on its eastern bank. No traces of it remain except the cellars of the houses, and a few aged orchards and willows near the modern village of the same name.

**Grand Pré.** Great meadow, from the extensive marshes adjacent.

19. **Acadie.** In the earliest records the name is *Cadie*; afterwards it was variously *Arcadia*, *Accadia* or *L'Acadie*. The name is probably the French adaptation of a Micmac word meaning place or region, the English modification of which, quoddy, appears in Quoddy Head, Quoddy Indians, and Passamaquoddy, i.e., Pollock Ground.

## PART THE FIRST.

Part the First deals with the deportation of the Acadians and the separation of the lovers. It contains five sections:—I. The Village of Grand Pré, and the lovers Evangeline and Gabriel; II. The autumn evening of their betrothal; III. The betrothal; IV. The Royal Proclamation of banishment; V. The embarkation and separation of the lovers.

### I.—EVANGELINE AND GABRIEL.

This section reflects Longfellow's peculiar attitude towards love and marriage. Of ardent and romantic passion his poetry is singularly devoid. Love as between the sexes is a calm and enduring affection based upon long acquaintance and clear recognition of worth, and equally removed from the enthusiasm of Browning and the mercenary motives so prevalent in old and wealthy societies. Members of a simple primitive community that lived like one large family, the children of life-long friends, and themselves playmates and good comrades from infancy, Evangeline's and Gabriel's love was merely the flower of the social spirit which prevailed in the village. There is something fine and wholesome in this, and yet it must be regarded as one of Longfellow's limitations that he has nowhere entered into complete sympathy with the idealizing passion of the lover. Work like Carlyle's chapter on Romance in *Sartor Resartus* is apparently quite beyond him.

#### I. THE VILLAGE.

The poet's object being to provide the idyllic setting for the loves of Evangeline and Gabriel, his use of his material is admittedly skilful. Only such details and persons are introduced as are interesting in themselves, and best mark the contrast between the Acadian happiness of Grand Pré and our hard, grasping individualism. The name of the village, the style of the houses, the bright dresses, housewifely virtues and gay vivacity of the women, the devotion of all, and their strong

communal or social spirit are, in view of the poet's intention, well chosen and significant. But waiving the question of historic accuracy (see note on ll. 52-57), Longfellow's picture is fantastic. Rustic life of such ideal excellence never existed outside of the artificial pastoral of the Corin and Phillida type. Compared with the stern realism of Wordsworth's and Scott's pictures of rural life, Longfellow's "local color" seems almost trifling.

20. **Basin of Minas.** The Bay of Fundy is divided at its upper or eastern end (see map) by the county of Cumberland into two parts. The southern is the Basin of Minas.

21. **Distant, secluded, still.** Cf. Goldsmith's "Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow."

22. **Vast meadows.** Some 2,100 acres of natural marsh meadow.

23. **Giving the village its name.** Grand Pré. (See note on line 15.)  
**flocks without number.** According to Abbé Reynal their horned cattle amounted to 60,000—obviously a gross exaggeration.

24. **Dikes.** Their dikes were a double row of piles with logs laid lengthwise, and the interstices filled with clay packed hard. A flood-gate allowed the water to flow out at low tide.

25. **turbulent tides.** So rapid is the advance of the tidal wave at full moon that cattle have frequently been overtaken and drowned.

29. **Blomidon.** A rocky headland of red sandstone on the south side of the narrow entrance to Minas Basin. A glance at the map will show how it was north to Grand Pré.

**mountains.** The Cobequid mountains on the northern side of the Basin, opposite to Grand Pré.

34. **peasants of Normandy.** Assuming that the Acadians were chiefly of Norman origin, the poet moulds all details of costumes and superstitions in harmony with his assumption. They were, however, descendants of the colonists brought out in 1632-1638 by de Razilly and Charisay from about Rochelle, Sanetonge and Poitou, on the west coast of France.

**the Henries.** Henry III. of Valois, 1574-89, and Henry IV. of Navarre, 1589-1610.

35. **dormer-windows.** (Lat. *dormire*, to sleep.) Vertical windows in a small gable looking out of the side of a sloping roof.

39. **kirtles.** Jacket and skirt made the full kirtle. A half-kirtle was either jacket or skirt.



40. **distaffs.** The distaff was a staff held in the hand or stuck in the belt, upon which was fastened the wool or flax for spinning. The invention of the spinning-wheel at Nuremburg, 1530, did away with the distaff.

43. Compare the priest of Grand Pré with Goldsmith's priest in *The Deserted Village*.

49. **the Angelus.** The angelus bell. *Angelus domini* (see *Luke* i, 28. *Angelus Nuntiavit Mariae*) was the full name given to the bell which at morning, noon and night called the people to prayer in commemoration of the visit of the angel of the Lord to the Virgin Mary.

52-7. In his *History of Acadia*, Hannay shows that the Acadians were litigious, insincere in their professions, unfaithful to their solemn pledges of neutrality, and treacherously hostile to the English, who had shown them every indulgence. The Abbé Reynal (1713-1796), an ardent friend of the people, drew this fancy sketch of Acadian life as a foil to the miserable condition of the French peasantry under Louis XVI. The uncritical Haliburton incorporated the Abbé's description bodily in his history, and the equally uncritical Longfellow finding it there used it as poetic material.

## 2. EVANGELINE AND HER FATHER.

In narrative poetry character is of course subordinate to incident and ornament, yet Longfellow's delineations are external beyond most others. Benedict is merely a hale old man of seventy winters, with white hair and brown checks. Evangeline is seventeen years, with brown hair and black, vivacious, yet soft and gentle eyes. Her disposition remains largely a blank, notwithstanding the poet's elaborate attempt to present her in the three several aspects of bringing ale to the reapers, going to church on Sunday morning, returning after the service. When Longfellow's American commentator, Scudder, boasts of the pictures for which the poem has furnished a theme, one feels like giving the answer Hippolyta makes to Theseus in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, when the latter, pleading for the poor artisans who having presented a play in his honor, says that nothing is wholly bad if imagination amend it. It must, says Hippolyta, be your imagination then. What is Benedict to Michael, or Evangeline to the Highland Reaper!

66. **thorn.** The sloe or blackthorn, whose berries have a blackish bloom? or the wild blackberry?

70. **Flagon.** A drinking vessel with a narrow mouth.



72. **hyssop.** A plant with blue purple flowers used to give a pleasing aromatic odour to the consecrated water with which the priest in the Roman Catholic service sprinkles the people as the choir sings: "Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop and I shall be cleansed."

74. **chaplet.** The rosary or string of beads used by Roman Catholics in counting their prayers.

**missal.** (Lat. *missa*, the mass.) The mass book containing the ordinary ritual of the Roman Catholic church.

### 3. EVANGELINE'S HOME.

82. **rafters of oak.** An architectural capping of the climax. In Ontario, rafters are usually of some lighter material, spruce or pine.

83. **Sycamore.** In England, a species of maple. In America the name is often given to the buttonwood or plane tree, but as the latter is not a Nova Scotia tree, the maple is probably intended. Hemlock, in line 33, was chestnut till some critic drew attention to the fact that the chestnut was not indigenous in Nova Scotia. Sycamore may be a similar slip.

**woodbine.** The honey suckle, called woodbine, *i.e.*, woodbind, from its habit of twining about trees.

87. **penthouse.** O.E., *pentice*; O.F., *appentis*; Lat., *appendicium* an appendage. A shed with a sloping roof and open sides.

88-89. A reminiscence of the poet's travels in Catholic Europe.

90. Cf. "The old oaken bucket that hangs in the well."

93. **broad-wheeled.**

**wain.** (A.S., *waegn*.) A softened form of waggon.

**antique ploughs.** *Antique* is here accented on the first syllable where it remains in the form *antic*, which once had the same general meaning. Their clumsy wooden plough, with one shaft or handle and no iron about it except the point, would look queer in comparison with the shapely and effective structure of steel which the modern farmer uses.

94. **seraglio.** Literally the palace of the Sultan, but, as generally used, the harem or women's apartments, and then the wives themselves.

96. **the penitent Peter.** "And Peter remembered the words of Jesus which said unto him: Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out and wept bitterly." *Matthew* xxvi, 75.

100-102. The constancy of love opposed to the mutability of things. A slight suggestion of this.

## 4. EVANGELINE'S LOVER.

This is the beginning of the love interest which, it must be admitted, is rather tame. A master of plot and incident like Scott would have introduced two or more rival suitors, for one of whom the lady had a decided preference, while circumstances, or what she regarded as her duty, seemed to require her acceptance of the other. This, of course, Longfellow does not attempt. Evangeline has other suitors, but the sole purpose of their anonymous introduction is to emphasize her charms; there is never the slightest doubt about her preference for Gabriel, or of their parents' approval of their betrothal. Simplicity being his aim, complications such as suggested could form no part of the poet's plan, but he might have made more of the idealizing power of love, whose witchery is felt in humble life as in the higher ranks. Of work like Carlyle's "divine revelation in the form of a snow and rose-bloom maiden," Longfellow is absolutely incapable. His conception of love is too unenthusiastic. The love of Gabriel and Evangeline is just the flower of childhood and youthful friendship. His admirers will say that the hysterical passion of which other poets write either has no existence in fact, or is as short-lived as violent, and that Longfellow's conception of love as calm and tried affection possesses the greater truth and sanity.

107. **touch the hem of her garment.** An allusion to *Luke* viii, 43, where the woman is healed by touching the hem of Christ's garment.

108. **by the darkness befriended.** The bashfulness of the lover.

111. **Patron Saint.** In the middle ages every trade, place, or person had a particular tutelary saint who was accordingly designated a patron saint. Who was the patron saint of Grand Pré?

113. **that seemed a part of the music.** Is this consistent with the following line?

118. **craft of the smith.** All the crafts had at one time their special societies or confraternities. The craft of the smith was naturally held in high esteem by the early warlike races, as shown by the Vulcan myth in classical times and the Weyland myth in the middle ages. Longfellow by numerous references makes clear his own respect for this trade.

120. **Father Felician.** (*La felix*, happy.) The name symbolizes the character and influence of the priest.

121. **pedagogue.** In classical times the servant who took the

children to school (*παις αγω*). Later, the teacher himself with implied disparagement. Here used in a complimentary sense.

122. **selfsame book.** The missal.

**plain-song.** In the Roman Catholic church, the chanting of the collects.

128. **like a fiery snake,** etc. The reference is to the tire which is expanded by heating before being placed on the wheel so that contracting when plunged into water it may remain firmly fixed.

133. **nuns going into the chapel.** The French have several such sayings: "Soldiers going to war," "Guests going to the wedding."

137. **wondrous stone.** Pluquet, treating of Norman superstitions, relates the common belief that if one of a swallow's brood be blind, the mother seeks on the seashore a little stone with which she restores its sight, and that anyone finding the stone in the swallow's nest has a sovereign remedy.

142. **ripened thought into action.** Stimulated others to realize what they had only dreamed of.

144. **Sunshine of St. Eulalie.** St. Eulalie was a Spanish maiden who suffered at Merida on the 12th February, 308, during Diocletian's persecution of the Christians. St. Eulalie's day is therefore the 12th of February. An old French proverb runs as follows:—

On St. Eulalie's day if the sun be showing,  
There'll be plenty of apples and cider flowing.

## II.—THE BETROTHAL EVENING.

This section carries the story forward to the autumn evening when Evangeline and Gabriel are formally betrothed. Opening with a beautiful description of Indian Summer, it contains the two charming companion pictures of Autumn Evening in the Farmyard and Autumn Evening Indoors, and concludes with the arrival of the blacksmith and his son. Basil tells of the anxiety of the villagers regarding the English ships in the harbor. This is the first discordant note, the cloud no larger than a man's hand, and though the subject is dropped as inappropriate to the glad occasion, we vaguely feel that the lovers' sky is about to be overcast.

### 1. INDIAN SUMMER.

149. **sign of the Scorpion.** One of the twelve signs of the zodiac. The sun enters this sign about October 23rd.

150. **Birds of passage.** Migratory birds.

153. **as Jacob of old with the angel.** See *Genesis xxxii, et seq.*

159. **Summer of All-Saints.** Indian summer usually beginning about All Saints day, November 1st.

170. **the plane-tree the Persian adorned,** etc. Herodotus says that on the way to Greece Xerxes found on the frontiers of Lydia, a beautiful plane-tree of which he became enamoured, adorning it like a woman and leaving it under the protection of a guard.

## 2. AUTUMN EVENING IN THE FARMYARD.

The merry bustle of this scene should be compared with the noontide picture of lines 93-102, where the sunsteeped farmyard is deserted of all but the domestic fowl.

189. **Norman saddles.** Very high in front, and made chiefly of wood.

## 3. AUTUMN EVENING INDOORS.

One would think that Longfellow might have made more of this contrast between reminiscent old age and expectant maidenhood. The old man's mood is not inaptly rendered. In the security of his abundance and isolation—a false security as it turns out—he gazes at the fire, humming snatches of old ballads and ruminating on the vicissitudes to which life is liable in more exposed situations. Evangeline, however, is but superficially sketched. Her industry is referred to, but of her thoughts and feelings the single indication is her sitting closer to her father, as if touched by the thought of soon leaving him for her husband's home. How another poet would have developed the situation.

203. **Darted.** With the farmer's movements. He was probably rocking.

205. **pewter plates.** Pewter is an alloy of lead and tin formerly much used for dishes, spoons and other domestic utensils.

**dresser.** A low cupboard.

206. **as shields of armies the sunshine.** Supply the predicate "catch" with the subject "shields."

209. **Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vineyards.** As a matter of fact, the Acadians were Bretons or Gascons. See note on line 34.

212-213. An echo of Wordsworth's description of Isabel in *Michael*,



## 4. ARRIVAL OF GABRIEL AND BASIL.

The friendship of the two old men is intended as a foil to the youthful enthusiasm of the lovers. Friendship, we see, like love is not a "like to like but a like in difference." Here, too, in Basil's account of the anxiety of the village regarding the purpose of the English war vessels in the harbor we have, as already pointed out, the first discordant note.

227. **joyial.** Derivation and meaning?

228. **harvest moon.** The full moon nearest the 21st of September or the autumnal equinox, rises for several consecutive nights at nearly the same time.

231. **jest.** Benedict's comparison of Basil's face to the harvest moon.

234. **horseshoe.** It is difficult to account for the widespread belief in the efficacy of a horseshoe. Lord Nelson had one nailed to the mast of the *Victory*.

238. **Gaspereau.** See map.

240. **his Majesty's mandate.** "At a consultation between Colonel Winslow and Captain Murray, it was agreed that a proclamation should be issued at the different settlements requiring the attendance of the people at the respective posts on the same day (5th Sept, 1755); which proclamation should be so ambiguous in its nature that the object for which they were to assemble could not be discerned; and peremptory in its terms as to ensure implicit obedience." Haliburton.

**his Majesty.** George II., 1727-1760.

249. **Louisburg.** On the southeast coast of Cape Breton. It was built after the treaty of Utrecht had transferred the Nova Scotian mainland to England, and was intended to be the centre of French naval and military strength in America. Captured in 1745 by a Massachusetts force, restored in 1748, it was finally taken and dismantled in 1758. At the time of the banishment of the Acadians it was in the possession of the French.

**Beau Séjour.** Fair Abode. A French fort at the head of Cumberland Basin. It had just been taken by Winslow's forces before the circumstances mentioned in the text.

**Port Royal.** Founded by Champlain in 1604 at the mouth of the Annapolis river. Captured by the English in 1710, and rechristened Annapolis Royal. It was the capital of the Province till 1749, when the government was transferred to Halifax.



252. **Arms have been taken from us.** During the summer of 1755 the Acadians were ordered to surrender their guns to the English commandants at the several forts.

259. The contract was the legal marriage, which was followed by the religious ceremony.

260. Haliburton, on the authority of Reynal, says that when a young man reached marriageable age the community built him a house and stored it with food for a twelvemonth. There he brought the partner he had chosen and also her dowry in flocks.

261. **the glebe.** First, farming land belonging to the church, then any such land as here.

267. A notary is an officer authorized to attest contracts or writings of any kind.

### III.—THE CONTRACT.

The presence of the mysterious ships in the harbor throws a shade of sadness on the otherwise joyous occasion of Evangeline's betrothal. Basil, notwithstanding Benedict's warning, brings the matter up again on the notary's entrance. The notary had heard the village gossip, but disclaims being of those who are ready to suspect evil intentions. And yet his story, while it teaches the ultimate triumph of justice, only deepens our impression of the possibility of injustice in the meantime. The contract is signed, the notary departs, and the rest relapse into silence, until Evangeline brings out the draught board. In the friendly contention the old men forget their gloomy forebodings, as do the lovers in each other's society. Nine o'clock comes, Gabriel and his father depart, and in the seclusion of her chamber there comes over Evangeline's heart a feeling of sadness.

#### I. THE NOTARY AND HIS STORY.

270. **Shocks.** A corruption of *shog*, the root of shaggy.

275. Queen Anne's war (1702-13).

280. **Loup-garou.** Were-wolf, *i. e.*, man-wolf. A man with power to turn himself into a wolf, which he does that he may devour children.

281. Cf. Milton's *L'Allegro* or Shakespeare's *M. N. D.* for traces of a similar superstition.

282. Pluquet, who relates this superstition, thinks it may have been suggested by the white ermine.

284. Among the European peasantry the belief still lingers that on Christmas Eve the cattle in the stalls fall down in adoration of the infant Saviour, as the legend says was done in the stable at Bethlehem.

285. Cf. the English superstition that ague could be cured by wearing about the neck a spider sealed up in a goose quill.

302. An old Florentine story which in an altered form became the theme of Rossini's opera, *La Gazza Ladra*.

328. Apply the figure to the state of Basil's mind.

## 2. SIGNING THE CONTRACT.

344. draughts. So called from the circumstance of drawing the men from one square to another.

348. embrasure. Generally used in the military sense of an opening for cannon. Here it means a window in a thick wall.

## 3. EVANGELINE'S CHAMBER.

354. curfew. A corruption of *couvre-feu* or cover fire. In the middle ages, when police patrol at night was unknown, it was attempted to lessen crime by making it an offence against the laws to be found in the streets at night, and the curfew bell was tolled at various hours, from seven to nine o'clock, according to the custom of the place. It warned people to lock their doors, cover their fires and go to bed.

381. Cf. *Gen.* xxi, 14, for the story of Hagar and Ishmael.

## IV.—THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION.

The village has now been described and the principal characters introduced. Though the picture may not stand close inspection, Longfellow has contrived to throw a certain charm over the whole. The beauty of Evangeline, the comely strength of Gabriel, Benedict's jovial good humor, the somewhat irascible honesty of Basil, and the idyllic life of these ignorant Acadian peasants have won our sympathy and we are prepared to resent the arbitrary action of the British Government.

### 1. THE VILLAGE IN HOLIDAY DRESS.

As a background on which to paint in more violent contrast the base treachery of the government, Longfellow displays the simple, guileless nature of the Acadians. They have been summoned to hear his majesty's mandate, the contents of which have been purposely con-

cealed. Wholly unsuspecting, however, they come into town in holiday dress, intending to make merry with their friends. They find they have been cruelly betrayed.

385-6. labour . . . with its hundred hands. Explain.

395-8. This is based on the Abbé Reynal's highly colored account of rural bliss in Acadia.

## 2. EVANGELINE'S BETROTHAL FEAST.

413. *Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres*, etc. Lit., all the citizens of Chartres; a song composed by Henry IV.'s master of the music, Du Caurroy (1549-1609).

*Le Carillon de Dunkerque*. The chimes of Dunkirk; a popular tune among the Acadians.

## 3. THE PROCLAMATION.

427. casement. A window to turn on hinges.

430. their commander. Col. John Winslow (1702-1774).

456. we never have sworn them allegiance. They persistently refused the oath. See introduction.

## 4. FATHER FELICIAN'S INFLUENCE.

461. chancel. That part of the church where the altar is placed. The door mentioned leads from the vestry.

466. tocsin's alarm. The alarm bell (O.F., *toquesin*, to strike).

470. vigils. Watches.

474. the crucified Christ from His cross, etc. Pointing to the image of Christ on the Cross. Cf. Browning's *Fra Lippo Lippo* :

Whose sad face on the cross sees only this  
After the passion of a thousand years.

478. O Father, forgive them. Christ's prayer for those who crucified him.

## 5. EVENING SERVICE.

482. tapers. Candles on the altar.

484. Ave Maria. Hail Mary. An invocation in use in the Roman Catholic service.

486. Elijah. See *II. Kings*, ii.

## 6. EVANGELINE'S HELPFULNESS.

The poet's object here is to show, in Evangeline's case, how sweet are the uses of adversity. Her attention to the ordinary details of household duty, her self-forgetfulness and strong words of comfort are contrasted with the other women's helpless wailing, and wandering from house to house in the village. The comparison between the fragrance which rises from the meadows as the shadows of evening begin to fall upon it, and the "charity, meekness, love, and hope" that rise from the fields of her soul as the shades of adversity fall, is very effective.

490. **level rays.** Cf. Scott :

The western waves of ebbing day  
Rolled o'er the glen their level way.

492. **emblazoned.** To emblazon is literally to adorn anything with armorial bearings. These were often worked into the design of painted windows.

494. **wheaten.** Their Norman fathers ate rye or barley bread.

495. **tankard.** A large metal drinking-vessel with a lid.

498. **ambrosial.** Ambrosia was the food, nectar the drink of the gods. Ambrosial therefore means anything pleasing to the taste or smell.

499. **her spirit within.** A biblical phrase. Cf. also Tennyson's "and her spirit changed within."

507. **the Prophet.** Moses. See *Exodus*, xxxiv, 29-35. Explain the simile.

## 7. EVANGELINE'S FAITH.

This is a companion picture to the foregoing, intended to show the consoling and sustaining power of Evangeline's character.

## V.

This account of the embarkation of the Acadians is based upon Haliburton's history, which merely repeats the Abbé Reynal's exaggerations. As a matter of fact great care was taken to prevent the separation of families. - Accepting the story, however, as he found it, Longfellow has managed it with considerable art, and while arousing our sympathy for the exiled community he contrives to fix our attention upon the still more pathetic experience of Evangeline. With the other women she has been all day superintending the removal of household

goods to the beach. In the evening the men, who have been for four days shut up in the church, are released. With a perfectly natural impulse, Evangeline runs first to her lover, but observing her father's altered looks, she goes to him. In the confusion of embarking Gabriel is hurried aboard, while she is left with her father on the shore. The burning of the village is the old man's deathblow, and Evangeline, bereft of husband and father, is left utterly desolate.

### 1. THE ASSEMBLING OF THE WOMEN.

There is something very pathetic in the introductory paragraph. The crowing of the cocks as if to awaken the sleeping maids to the ordinary routine of life, the women's last looks at their homes and the children's clinging to the fragments of playthings.

525. **maids.** To whom does this refer ?

526. **yellow fields.** Why yellow ?

531. **urged on the oxen.** The ponderous wain and the weight of household goods.

### 2. THE MARCH TO THE SHORE.

535. The boats were, of course, manned by English sailors.

541. At Grand Pré the males from ten years upwards were collected and shut up in the church until the time of embarkation. They numbered 400.

557. **eagerly running.** Quite in keeping with Acadian simplicity and their recent betrothal.

### 3. THE SEPARATION OF EVANGELINE AND GABRIEL.

569. **in the confusion.** The hurry, confusion and excitement of the embarkation.

570. **Wives were torn, etc.** An exaggeration; some separations possibly took place, but the greatest care was taken to keep families together.

575. **refluent ocean.** The outgoing tide.

577. **kelp.** Large, coarse seaweed.

579. **leaguer after a battle.** The camp of a besieged army; from Ger. *lager*.

582. **its nethermost caves.** Cf. "its rocky caverns," in l. 5.



## 4. FATHER FELICIAN'S SYMPATHY.

597. **shipwrecked Paul.** See *Acts* xxvii, 22.

**Melita.** The ancient name of Malta; Gk. *Μελίτα*.

601. **face of a clock.** Longfellow had a preference for illustrations drawn from the clock.

605. **Benedicite.** Bless ye. The imperative second plural which begins the Latin benediction of the Roman Catholic Church.

## 5. THE BURNING OF THE VILLAGE.

615. **Titan-like.** The Titans were the fabled children of Heaven and Earth (Uranus and Gaia) who waged war against Chronos. Briareus, one of the Titans, had a hundred hands. In attempting to scale Olympus, the abode of the gods, they piled Mount Pelion on Mount Ossa. (Hence the expression to pile Pelion on Ossa.) They were finally subdued by the thunderbolts of Jupiter, the son of Chronos.

619. Col. Winslow was commanded to deprive those who might escape of all shelter and support.

621. **gleeds.** Burning coals.

## 6. THE DISMAY OF THE PEOPLE AND THE TERROR OF THE HOMELESS BEASTS.

630. **sleeping encampments.** Indian camps.

631. **Nebraska.** The Platte river, a tributary of the Missouri, which it joins below Omaha.

## 7. THE DEATH OF BENEDICT.

653. Many did subsequently return.

657. **without bell or book.** The tolling of the bell marks the passing of the soul into the other world. The book is, of course, the book of services for the dead. Cf. "bell, book and candle" in connection with excommunication.

## PART THE SECOND.

## I.

668. **household gods.** An allusion to the lares, manes and penates, or household gods of the Romans.

669. **without an example.** Compare Louis XIV's treatment of the Huguenots, or Ferdinand of Spain's treatment of the Jews.

674. **savanna.** A treeless plain.

675. **Father of Waters.** The Mississippi.

676. **Seizes the hills, etc.** Rivers are constantly bringing down sediment, which they deposit at their mouth.

677. **mammoth.** An extinct species of elephant very much larger than the existing type. Its remains are found in Europe and America.

705. **Coueurs-des-bois.** In the early history of French occupation, those half-decivilized Frenchmen or half-breeds engaged in the fur trade.

707. **voyageur.** A river boatman.

713. **to braid St. Catherine's tresses.** There were two St. Catherines, both vowed to virginity. To braid St. Catherine's tresses means consequently to remain unmarried.

720. **affection never was wasted.**

I hold it true whate'er befall,  
I feel it when I sorrow most,  
'Tis better to have loved and lost,  
Than never to have loved at all.

—Tennyson, "In Memoriam."

725. **Sorrow and silence are strong.** Cf. Wordsworth's *Peele Castle* :

But welcome fortitude and patient cheer  
And frequent sights of what is to be borne !

732. **shards.** Fragments of pottery.

## II.

741. **Beautiful River.** The Ohio.

742. **Wabash.** A tributary of the Ohio.

743. **golden stream.** The Mississippi is tinged yellow by the muddy waters of the Missouri.

749. **kith.** Literally an acquaintance.

750. **the Acadian coast.** Though ceded by France in 1762, Louisiana did not pass into the hands of Spain till 1769. Attracted by the presence of a French population on the lower Mississippi, the Acadians settled along the river from New Orleans to Point Coupée, above Baton Rouge.

**Opelousas.** A place in Louisiana sixty miles west of Baton Rouge.

755. **chutes.** In Canada, a rapid descent of a river, a fall ; but on the Mississippi a narrow channel with a free current.

plume-like Cotton-trees. The cottonwood, so-called because its seeds grow in catkins, and are covered with a cotton-like fibre.

757. lagoons. Here lake-like expansions of the river.

758. wimpling. Rippling.

761. china-trees. A species of mahogany, about thirty feet high, with bright green leaves, lilac-like flowers and yellow berries of a bitter-sweet taste.

764. citron. A species of lemon tree.

766. Bayou. A stagnant or sluggish channel leading from a river.

Plaquemine. About twenty-two miles below Baton Rouge, connecting the Mississippi with the Atchafalaya lakes.

768. network of steel. The network of natural canals which intersect the State of Louisiana near the mouth of the Mississippi.

769. tenebrous. Full of darkness.

772. herons. Birds that frequent low, marshy ground.

775. Cf. Gray's "The moping owl doth to the moon complain," etc.

780. compassed. Definitely stated.

782. mimosa. The sensitive plant.

783. hoof-beats of fate. Fate is not usually represented in this guise.

805. whoop of the crane. The American or whooping crane.

roar of the grim alligator. Edward King, in an article in *Scribner's Monthly*, November, 1873, descriptive of a steamboat trip down the Mississippi, speaks of the "bellowings of the alligators."

807. Atchafalaya. The chief of the three outlets of the Mississippi. The lakes are expansions.

809. lotus. The yellow water lily.

811. magnolia. A laurel growing on the Southern Mississippi to a height of seventy feet, bearing white, sweet smelling flowers.

816. Wachita. Also spelled *Ouachitta*, a tributary of the Mississippi.

820. trumpet-flower. A climbing shrub with yellowish trumpet-shaped flowers.

821. the ladder of Jacob. Is the simile effective?

837. palmettos. A species of palm; also called the cabbage tree.

845. Longfellow makes use of the absurd notion of the conveyance of intelligence from soul to soul by some secret psychic force.

856. **Têche.** A bayou beginning in St. Landry Parish and running south to the Atchafalaya, a distance of one hundred and eight miles.

873. Longfellow tried the pentameter verse in the mocking-bird's song :

Upon a spray that overhung the stream,  
The mocking-bird, awaking from his dream,  
Poured such delicious music from his throat  
That all the air seemed listening to his note.  
Plaintive at first the song began and slow ;  
It breathed of sadness and of pain and woe ;  
Then gathering all his notes, abroad he flung  
The multitudinous music of his tongue ;  
As after showers, a sudden gust again,  
Upon the leaves shakes down the rattling rain.

878. **Bacchantes.** Women votaries of Bacchus, the god of wine. With streaming hair they wildly danced, swaying and waving the thyrsus or staff entwined with ivy and crowned with a pine cone.

884. **the green Opelousas.** A beautifully verdant district on the Têche, covering an area of about one million acres.

### III.

890. **Yule-tide.** Christmas.

912. **Spanish saddle.** Higher than the English saddle in bow and back.

914. **sombrero.** (Shade giver) ; a broad brimmed hat worn in warm countries.

952. **Adayes.** The Spanish Jesuits had established missions about the middle of the 17th century, among the Adayes Indians, then living in what is now Western Louisiana. These were abandoned in 1693, and twenty years later the Franciscans took up the work, establishing four stations, one of which was called *San Miguel de los Adayes*.

953. **Ozark Mountains.** A low range running north-east and south-west through Missouri, Arkansas and Texas.

961. **Olympus.** A mountain in Northern Greece, the fabled home of the gods.

968. **gossip.** A familiar acquaintance.

970. **ci-devant.** Heretofore, a French phrase.

984. **Natchitoches.** A French settlement among the Natchez Indians on the Red River.

1004. **the fever.** The yellow scourge of the South.

1009. **Creoles.** Native born inhabitants of the West Indies or Spanish America of French or Spanish descent.

1033. **Carthusian.** An exceedingly strict monastic order founded in the 12th century, so called from the seat of the order, Chartreuse in France. Almost perpetual silence was one of their vows.

1044. **Upharsin.** Lit. "They are wanting;" the conclusion of the sentence written on the wall of the palace at Belshazzar's feast, "Mene, mene, tekel upharsin." See *Dan.* v, 5-28.

1057. **oracular caverns of darkness.** An allusion to the oracular oak groves at Epirus, Dodona, etc.

1063. **the Prodigal Son.** Gabriel. Explain the allusion. See *Luke* xv, 11-32.

1064. **the Foolish Virgin.** Evangeline. An allusion to *Matthew* xxi, 1-13.

who slept when the bridegroom was coming. A reference to Gabriel's passing while Evangeline's party slept on the island.

#### IV.

1078. **desert land.** Very vaguely defined; in Arkansas or Wyoming.

1082. **Oregon.** The Columbia.

**Walleway.** The Wallawalla, a tributary of the Columbia.

**Owyhee.** A tributary of the Snake, itself a tributary of the Oregon or Columbia.

1083. **Wind-river Mountains.** A spur of the Rockies in Wyoming.

1084. **Sweet-water Valley.** The valley of the Sweet-water in Wyoming, one of the upper tributaries of the Nebraska or Platte.

1085. **Fontaine-qui-bout.** Fountain that boils. It rises in Pike's Peak and flows into the Arkansas.

**the Spanish sierras.** Sierra means saw-shaped, and the Spanish Sierras are the Lower Rockies in what was then Spanish territory.

1091. **amorphas.** A leguminous shrub-like plant bearing spikes of purple flowers; sometimes also called Bastard Indigo.

1095. **Ishmael's children.** The Indians, whose fierce nomadic habits suggest a comparison with the Arabs, the reputed descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, by Hagar (*Gen.* xxi, 14, ff.).

1114. **Fata Morgana.** A sort of mirage first noticed in the Straits of Messina, less frequently elsewhere, hence its Italian name. It con-



sists of the appearance in the air over the sea of objects on the neighboring coast. Such a mirage is quite common in the south-western United States. It is due to unequally heated layers of air.

1119. **Shawnee.** A vagrant tribe of Algonquin Indians dwelling between the Red River and the Canadian River, in or near what is now Indian Territory.

1120. **Camanches.** A fierce Shoshonees tribe that dwelt in what is now Western Texas.

1139. Schoolcraft's *Algic Researches* is the source of Longfellow's Indian legend.

1167. **the Black Robe chief.** The Jesuit priest. The missions on the Mississippi were founded by Marquette in 1673.

1181. **vespers** (Lat. *vesper*, evening). The evening service.

1182. **susurrus.** Whispers (Lat. *susurro*, I whisper).

1192. **gourds.** Plants allied to the pumpkin and cucumber.

1194. **suns.** Years. The Indian mode of reckoning.

1199. **some lone nest.** Compare Wordsworth's sonnet, *To a Distant Friend*.

1211. **Cloisters for mendicant crows.** The crow from his color is likened to a black-robed brother of some mendicant order, and the corn-stalks are his cloister. The illustration does not seem very apt. Is it the proverbial impudence of the begging friars that Longfellow is thinking of?

1212. **golden weather.** Cf. the description of Indian summer in Part the First.

1213. **Blushed at each blood-red ear.** To find a red ear in husking was for a maiden a fortunate omen, pointing to her soon securing a brave warrior as a husband.

1219. **compass-flower.** Also called the Polar plant. "A tall, rough, bristly plant of the aster family, whose larger lower leaves are said to assume a vertical position with their edges turned north and south."

1222. **blossoms of passion.** This cannot refer to the Passion flower, which was thought to represent our Lord's passion, the filamentous processes the crown of thorns, the nail-shaped styles the nails of the cross, and the fine anthers the marks of the wounds. The expression must be wholly figurative. Contrast Father Felician and the Jesuit priest.

1226. **asphodel.** A flower of the lily family, with a pale blossom, sometimes called king's lance. In Greek mythology the departed heroes dwelt in meadows of asphodel. Compare also Tennyson's *Lotos-eaters*.

**nepenthe.** In Homer, a magic potion which produced forgetfulness of all sorrow.

1229. **wold.** (A.S. weald.) Open, hilly country.

1233. **Saginaw.** A Michigan river flowing into Lake Huron.

1241. **Tents of Grace . . . Moravian Missions.** The Moravians are a Protestant sect, followers of John Huss, who were driven from Bohemia at the beginning of the 18th century, and settled in Saxony under the protection of Count Zinzendorf, and hence often called *Hernhutens*. Tents of Grace is the name by which they designate their assembly places. They are devoted missionaries, working in Labrador, the Cape, Russia, Tartary, etc. In 1880 they had 100 mission stations and 350 missionaries.

1242. **battle-fields of the army.** What wars are meant?

## V.

1252. **Delaware.** The Delaware, rising in New York, forms the entire eastern boundary of the State of Pennsylvania.

1253. **Guarding in sylvan shades.** The name of the State is from Penn, the name of the founder, and *sylva*, a wood.

**Penn the apostle.** William Penn, the founder of Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, was one of the most influential Quakers of his time (1644-1718). The term "apostle" is owing to his deserved reputation for enlightened philanthropy.

1256. Many streets in Philadelphia are named after forest trees.

1257. **Dryads.** Wood nymphs.

1264. **the Thee and Thou.** The old second person singular, which has fallen into disuse in classic English except in solemn language, is still used by the Quakers, who, however, employ "thee" as subject as well as object.

1265. **recalled the past.** French use *tu* among near relatives and *vous* as a polite singular.

1288. **Sister of Mercy.** The French Order of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy (*Filles de Notre Dame de Misericorde*) was founded in 1633 by St. Vincent de Paul. They were recognized as an order by Pope Clement IX. in 1650. From the color of their dress they were

called the Gray Sisters. According to their vows they were to have for monastery the houses of the sick, for cloister the streets of the town or wards of the hospital, and for veil holy modesty.

1292. **the watchman.** The old time watchmen used to light the lamps early in the evening and go the rounds during the night, calling out as they went the hour and the weather.

1296. **German farmer.** Germans formed a large proportion of the original settlers.

1298. **a pestilence.** A terrible visitation of yellow fever in 1793.

1299. **wondrous signs.** Vast flocks of wild pigeons which were then thought to point to an unhealthy season.

1308. **almshouse.** Longfellow's explanation was: "I was passing down Spruce street (in Philadelphia) one day towards my hotel after a walk, when my attention was attracted to a large building with beautiful trees about it inside of a high enclosure. I walked along until I came to the great gate and then stepped inside and looked carefully over the place. The charming picture of lawn, flower-beds and shade which it presented made an impression which has never left me, and when I came to write *Evangeline* I placed the final scene, the meeting between *Evangeline* and *Gabriel*, and the death at the poor-house, and the burial in an old Catholic grave-yard not far away, which I found by chance in another of my walks."

1326. **Christ Church.** Erected in 1695, rebuilt in 1727, spire added 1754. The chimes were almost the first in America, and cost £560 at the time.

1328. **Swedes . . . church.** Built in 1700.

1383. **the little Catholic churchyard.** See note to line 1308.

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## A PSALM OF LIFE.

*A Psalm of Life* was written in Cambridge on a bright summer morning in July, 1838. "I kept it some time in manuscript," says Longfellow, "unwilling to show it to anyone, it being a voice from my inmost heart, at a time when I was rallying from depression." It was published anonymously in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, October, 1838, and was followed within the year by four other poems entitled psalms, viz., *A Psalm of Death (The Reaper and the Flowers)*; a second Psalm

of Life (*The Light of Stars*); a third Psalm of Life (*Footsteps of Angels*); a fourth Psalm of Life (*A Midnight Mass for the Dying Year*).

The first two lines of the poem indicate that the psalmist, i.e., the writer of this psalm, judging life merely from its externals, has come to the conclusion that all is vanity, that life is but an empty dream or show. Against this conclusion his better self, his *heart*, rises up and testifies. Compare the lines in *In Memoriam* :

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,  
I heard a voice 'believe no more,'  
And heard an ever-breaking shore  
That tumbled in a Godless deep ;  
  
A warmth within the breast would melt  
The freezing reason's colder part,  
And like a man in wrath, the heart  
Stood up and answered 'I have felt.'

The thought of the poem naturally falls into five divisions, the belief in immortality as an inspiration to earnest living, the desire for progress as a principle of action, the necessity of immediate and energetic effort, the possibilities and privileges of human life, and in the last stanza the final lesson to be drawn from the foregoing truths. "The *Psalm of Life* proclaims the gladness of living well to be the best of poetry."

In his *Letters on Literature*, Andrew Lang comments as follows upon the poetic value of the *Psalm of Life*:—

"I believe it is the manner, after all, of the *Psalm of Life*, that has made it so strangely popular. People tell us, excellent people, that it is 'as good as a sermon,' that they value it for this reason, that its lesson has strengthened the hearts of men in our difficult life. They say so and they think so; but the poem is not nearly as good as a sermon; it is not even coherent. But it really has an original cadence of its own with its double rhymes; and the pleasure of this cadence has combined with a belief that they are being edified, to make readers out of number consider the *Psalm of Life* a masterpiece. You, my learned prosodist and student of Browning and Shelley, will agree with me that it is not a masterpiece. But I doubt if you have enough of the experience brought by years to tolerate the opposite opinion as your elders can. Even in spite of this friendliness and affection which Longfellow wins, he does moralize too much! The first part of his lyrics is always the best, the part where he is dealing directly with his subject. Then comes the 'practical application,' as the preachers say, and I feel now that it is sometimes uncalled for, disenchanting, and even manufactured."



POETIC FORM.—*The Psalm of Life*, as its title indicates, is a lyric. It is, however, a lyric of reflection and contains a series of somewhat disjointed proverbial maxims which the poet has fused or bound together by his own personal enthusiasm. The stanza form is the quatrain. The metre is trochaic tetrameter, the unaccented syllable being dropped at the end of the second and fourth lines. Notice and account for the irregularities in ll. 4, 5, 16, 22. What is the effect of the use of the trochaic metre?

1. numbers. Lines in poetry, or notes in music.

2. an empty dream. The opposite of *real* and *earnest* in l. 5.

3-4. slumbers is perhaps suggested by *dream*, l. 2. He who considers life only as an empty dream, is, to all intents and purposes, *dead*. He is not *living*, in the true sense of the term.

7. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." *Genesis* iii, 19. See also *Eccles.* iii, 20.

13. It requires a great deal of time to attain perfection in any line of work, and life is quickly passing.

14-16. We may face the tasks of life bravely; nevertheless, every heart-beat brings us nearer death. There are various ways of muffling a drum so as to deaden the sound. It is commonly done by loosening the strings at the side and covering the drum-head with cloth.

18. bivouac. Cognate with the verb *watch*. An encampment for the night without tents. A bivouac implies preparation, on the part of the soldier, either to resume the march at any moment, or to resist sudden attack. Hence the word here suggests that life is but a preparation for eternity to follow, and emphasizes the necessity of watchfulness against despondency and idleness, the enemies of action.

21-23. Cf. the motto of Longfellow's *Hyperion*: "Look not mournfully into the Past. It comes not back again. Wisely improve the Present. It is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy Future without fear and with a manly heart."

22. *Luke* iv, 60.

24. "Let the heart be right; God will see that the result will be right." For a similar sentiment, see *I. Corinthians*, xv, 58.

28-32. Possibly suggested by the familiar incident in *Robinson Crusoe*. Perhaps there is a suggestion that the sands may harden into rock and preserve the footprints through all time.



35. Cf. Wordsworth's *Character of the Happy Warrior* :

Who, not content that former worth stand fast,  
Looks forward persevering to the last,  
From well to better, daily self-surpast.

36. to wait. That is, to wait patiently for results.

## WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

Composed December 30th, 1839. Published January, 1840.

The following extracts from Longfellow's diary and letters explain the history of its composition :—

Dec. 6, 1839. News of shipwrecks horrible on the coast. Twenty bodies washed ashore near Gloucester, one lashed to a piece of the wreck. There is a reef called Norman's Woe, where many of these wrecks took place ; among others the schooner *Hesperus*. Also the *Sea Flower* on Black Rock. Must write a ballad on this.

Dec. 30, 1839. I sat till 12 o'clock by my fire smoking, when suddenly it came into my mind to write the Ballad of the Schooner *Hesperus*, which I accordingly did. Then I went to bed, but could not sleep. New thoughts were running in my mind, and I got up to add them to the ballad. It was three by the clock. I then went to bed and fell asleep. I feel pleased with the ballad. It hardly cost me an effort. It did not come into my mind by lines, but by stanzas.

Jan. 2, 1840. I have broken ground in a new field, namely, ballads ; beginning with the wreck of the schooner *Hesperus* on the reef of Norman's Woe in the great storm of a fortnight ago. I shall send it to some newspaper. I think I shall write more. The *National Bullad* is a virgin soil here in New England, and there are great materials. Besides, I have a great notion of working on the *people's* feelings. I am going to have it printed on a sheet with a coarse picture on it. I desire a new sensation, and a new set of critics. Nat. Hawthorne is tickled with the idea. Felton laughs and says 'I wouldn't.'

The rough edition was not issued.

From these extracts from the poet's journal and letters, it will be noted that the newspaper accounts of the actual wreck of the *Hesperus* supplied little more than the mere suggestion of the story. One detail, however, was given, that of the body 'found lashed to a piece of wreck,' and from this single item the poet succeeded in developing a

narrative and shaping it into artistic form. In the ballad, the form lashed to the wreck appears as a child, the skipper's daughter, and around her fate the whole interest of the poem centres. The story of the sufferings of a child is always more tragic than that of another, and in this case Longfellow has made the most of favoring conditions. In order that her death may be the more impressive he brings into prominence her delicate beauty, her childish, questioning innocence, and her prayerful trust in

Christ who stilled the wave  
On the lake of Galilee.

The death of the father and the destruction of the *Hesperus*, which the poet has represented almost as a human being, serve only to set in relief, and to prepare us for, her own more tragic doom. As it is the child's death, too, rather than that of the skipper or crew, which excites our compassion, the consideration of it very properly closes the ballad.

The directness of the narrative, which deals only with the tragic and picturesque outlines of the story, and the use of simple and striking simile, contributes also to the effectiveness of the poem.

POETIC FORM.—*The Wreck of the Hesperus* is a ballad, and comes, therefore, under the head of Epic Poetry. For characteristics of the Ballad, see chapter on Poetic Form. It will be noticed that *The Wreck of the Hesperus* conforms to the demands of the ballad, in simplicity of style, directness of narration, and interest of stirring incident. The regular Ballad measure is used, viz., the quatrain, composed of alternate iambic tetrameter and trimeter line. Many irregularities are found, as for example in ll. 5, 13, 21, 49, 50, 60, 81, 85. Account for each of these? How can you justify such deviations from the regular metrical form? What is the effect of the absence of rhyme in the first and third lines of each stanza?

1. Compare with the first line of the *Ancient Mariner*.

5. **fairy-flax.** The dwarf or mountain flax, which exhibits a beautiful, delicate blue flower.

6-8. Cf. *She was a Phantom of Delight*, ll. 7-8 :

But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful dawn.

11. **flaw.** A sudden gust of wind ; a sudden and violent windstorm.

17. Cf. the *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens* :

Late, late, yestreen I saw the new moon  
 With the old moon in her arm ;  
 And I fear, I fear, my master dear !  
 We shall have a deadly storm.

29. Note the directness of the narrative, proper to the ballad.

55-6. *Mark iv*, 35-41.

60. **Norman's Woe.** A dangerous reef near the entrance to Gloucester harbor, Massachusetts.

82. In his criticism of the ballad, Poe objected strongly to this line.

83-4. Cf. Kingsley, *The Sands o' Dee* :

Oh, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—  
 A tress o' golden hair,  
 O' drowned maiden's hair  
 Above the nets, at sea ?

85-8. The picturesqueness of the proper names *Hesperus* and *Norman's Woe* adds to the poetic effect. The ballad properly does not admit of comment by the author in person. Does the addition of the last stanza, in the present poem, add to its effectiveness ?

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### THE DAY IS DONE.

Composed in 1844 : published in 1845. In 1844 Longfellow compiled a volume of lyrics from various poets, and prefixed to the collection (which he entitled *The Waif*) the present poem, of his own composition, as an introduction.

*The Day is Done* gives expression to a common mood of ordinary daily life. After the "toil and endeavor" of the day's duties there is often a reaction, a desire for freedom from the cares of the day, a longing for *rest*. The setting in of darkness, the accompanying rain and mist, the lights of the village suggesting life and companionship elsewhere, serve only to intensify this feeling of unrest. In such a mood the poet seeks and finds sympathy and relief in the soothing melody of "some simple and heartfelt lay," rather than in the 'mighty thoughts' of the 'grand old masters.' The appropriateness of such a sentiment as an introduction to a volume containing selections from such poets as Herrick and Shelley, is obvious.

POETIC FORM.—*The Day is Done* is a simple lyric giving expression to the poet's personal feeling of longing and unrest. The tone of the poem

shows strongly the influence of German lyric poets, such as Heine and Uhland. The effect of the regular iambic trimeter measure is varied by the use of feminine endings and the frequent introduction of anapæstic and trochaic feet.

3-4. What is the main point in the simile ?

5. **village.** Cambridge, which was incorporated as a city in 1846.

9. In a poem entitled *In the Twilight*, Lowell speaks also of the indefinable feelings to which the approach of darkness gives rise.

33-36. Cf. Longfellow, *Hymn to the Night*, stanza x :

O holy night ! from thee I learn to bear  
 What man has borne before !  
 Thou layest thy finger on the lips of care,  
 And they complain no more.

41-44. Discuss the poetic value of the simile.

### THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

Longfellow's journal of Nov. 12, 1845, contains the following entry : "Began a poem on a clock, with the words 'Forever, Never,' as a burden ; suggested by the words of Bridaine, the old French missionary, who said of eternity 'C'est une pendule,' etc." The translation of the extract from Bridaine, quoted in the journal and used in part as a motto for the poem, is as follows : "Eternity is a clock, the pendulum of which says and repeats these two words only, in the silence of the tomb, 'Forever ! never ! Never ! forever !' and during these awful revolutions one reprobate soul cries, 'What time is it ?' and the voice of another in anguish replies, 'Eternity.'"

Jacques Bridaine (1701-1767) was a famous French preacher and home missionary. He travelled through the south of France, preaching from town to town, and enjoyed a wide popularity. Being invited to go to Paris to preach, he delivered there, in the church of St. Sulpice, a sermon on *Eternity*, which is described as having produced "a terrible impression" on all who heard it.

*The Old Clock on the Stairs* describes a clock standing on the staircase of an "old-fashioned country-seat," now known as the Plunkett Mansion, in Pittsfield, Mass., belonging to the maternal grandfather of Mrs. Longfellow. Longfellow was married in July, 1843, to Miss Frances Appleton, daughter of Nathan Appleton, of



Boston, and in the course of their wedding trip they made a visit to Pittsfield, where Longfellow saw the old clock and heard something of the family history. Ten years later, Sept. 10, 1853, his journal contains the entry, "The old homestead at Pittsfield has been sold—reserving only the 'old clock on the stairs.'" The now famous clock was removed to Boston and stands in the residence of Mr. Thomas Appleton.

The plan of the poem is systematic. Stanza one introduces the subject; stanzas two and three deal with place and time, while the remainder of the poem follows in regular order the course of family life—as in *The Hanging of the Crane*—and applies the motto of the poem to each and every scene. The obvious teaching of the poem, the explanation of the motto, is contained in the last stanza, and the poem is therefore one of consolation. To all pain and sorrow, and to the regrets that mingle with the pleasures of life, the common answer is given—

On Earth the broken arcs ;  
In Heaven the perfect round.

But is there not, perhaps, also in the poem, besides this doctrine of consolation for the short-lived pleasures of life, a suggestion of the necessity of earnest activity, the lesson of the *Psalm of Life*? Time is passing! Eternity is at hand! Opportunities neglected and tasks unperformed will *never* return; they have passed away *forever*.

POETIC FORM.—*The Old Clock on the Stairs* may be classed as a *lyrical ballad*. Unlike *The Day is Done* or *The Fire of Driftwood*, it almost entirely lacks the individual and personal note characteristic of the lyric. On the other hand, it deals principally with the past, though with the history of a familiar object rather than with historical incident or stirring event. The refrain following each stanza, however, as well as the lyrical tone of the concluding stanzas, justify the application of the term lyric to the poem. The metre is iambic tetrameter, varied by the frequent introduction of trochaic and anapæstic feet. The imitative refrain at the end of each stanza is after the manner of Poe. How does the use of the rhyming couplet harmonize with the sentiment of the poem?

1-8. The words of the refrain at the end of each stanza gain additional impressiveness and solemnity by their association with the antique past. The voice of the old clock is, as it were, a voice from the grave. Hence the appropriateness of the choice of epithets—*old-fashioned, antique, ancient*.

3. *portico*. An open vestibule or porch, with roof supported by columns.



12. Explain the points of the simile and discuss its appropriateness.

35. Hospitality is personified, as indicated by the use of the capital.

37. **skeleton at the feast.** A reference to an eastern custom described by Herodotus in speaking of the Egyptians, as follows: "At their convivial banquets, among the wealthy classes, when they have finished supper, a man carries round in a coffin the image of a dead body carved in wood, made as like as possible in color and workmanship, and in size generally about one or two cubits in length; and showing this to each of the company, he says, "Look upon this, then drink and enjoy yourself; for when dead you will be like this."—*Herodotus* ii, 78. Tr. Cary. Cf., also, Scott, *The Talisman*, xxviii.

43. **prime.** The spring of life; youthful health, strength or beauty.

44. **affluence.** Abundance, profusion.

57. Cf. Longfellow, *The Hanging of the Crane* :

The crown of stars is broken in parts;  
Its jewels, brighter than the day,  
Have one by one been stolen away  
To shine in other homes and hearts.

60. Cf. Longfellow, *Auf Wiedersehen*, Stanza I :

Until we meet again! That is the meaning  
Of the familiar words, that men repeat  
At parting in the street.  
Ah yes, till then! but when death intervening  
Rends us asunder, with what ceaseless pain  
We wait for the Again!

## THE FIRE OF DRIFTWOOD.

Written in 1846. Published in the volume entitled *Seaside and Fireside*, 1850.

An entry in Longfellow's journal of Sept. 29, 1846, gives an account of the visit to Marblehead, out of which this poem arose. "A delicious drive through Malden and Lynn to Marblehead to visit E. W. at the Devereux Farm by the seaside. Drove across the beautiful sand. What a delicious scene! The ocean in the sunshine changing from the silvery hue of the thin waves upon the beach, through the lighter and deeper green, to the rich purple in the horizon. We recalled the times past and the days when we were at Nahant. The Devereux Farm is by the sea, some miles from Lynn. An old-fashioned farm-house, with low

rooms and narrow windows rattling in the sea-breeze. After dinner we drove to Marblehead—a strange old place on a rocky promontory, with narrow streets, and strange, ugly houses scattered at random, cornerwise and everywise, thrusting their shoulders into the streets and elbowing the passers out of their way. A dismantled fort looks seaward. We rambled along the breastworks, which are now a public walk, and asked in vain for the Reef of Norman's Woe, which is, nevertheless, in this neighborhood. On returning to the Devereux Farm we sat on the rocks and listened to "the bellowing of the savage sea."

Marblehead is a seaport in Essex county, Massachusetts, fifteen miles north-east of Boston. It is built on an elevated and rocky peninsula four miles in length and two in width, projecting into Massachusetts Bay. It was once incorporated with Salem, which joins it on the west. Many of the houses date from the colonial period, and one of the churches was built in 1714. The population in 1890 was 8,200.

The *Fire of Driftwood* is an attempt to describe in language, as Tennyson has done in *The Days That Are No More*, the vague, evanescent feelings of longing and regret which are associated with the memories of the past. Longfellow finds—as does Tennyson also—that he can best accomplish his purpose not by direct lyric expression, but by calling in the aid of the concrete to typify for him his own abstract feelings and emotions. Both in the driftwood, speaking as it does of the wrecks of the past, as well as in the fitful and expiring flame, he finds a symbol of the "long-lost ventures of the heart," the dreams, the yearnings, the friendships, which have long expired, leaving only the sad memory in the heart.

The poet does not attempt to spiritualize his theme or to show the effect of such musings on the mind, as does Wordsworth. Cf. *Intimations of Immortality*: "The thought of our past years in me doth breed perpetual benediction." As in Tennyson's lyric, referred to above, the poem simply aims at giving expression to the mood, without examining into the relations of such moods to life.

It will be observed also that in the *setting* of the poem the poet has depicted such details as are in keeping with the general theme. As "sad and strange" as are the days that are no more, is the strange, old-fashioned town with its *dismantled* fort and quaint houses. The sea breeze is damp and cold, and the gloom of the room is in keeping with the gloom of the heart. Finally, the strangeness of the voices heard while the speaker is unseen, suggests the startling strangeness of our past hopes and longings seen through the intervening years.

POETIC FORM.—In lyrical quality this poem resembles *The Day is Done* more than any other contained in these selections. Both poems are written in a decidedly minor key. In metrical form *The Fire of Driftwood* is quite regular. There is little variation from the almost uniform iambic tetrameter measure. Point out any instances of the introduction of trochaic feet, and any examples of slurred syllables.

5-8. port. The harbor of Marblehead.

town. Marblehead.

lighthouse. On the point of the peninsula at the entrance to the harbor.

dismantled fort. Fort Sewall, constructed in 1742.

13-24. Cf. Scott, *Lady of the Lake*, Canto i, 33 :

Again returned the scenes of youth,  
Of confident undoubting truth ;  
Again his soul he interchanged  
With friends whose hearts were long estranged,  
They come, in dim procession led,  
The cold, the faithless, and the dead ;  
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,  
As if they parted yesterday.

17-20. Cf. Clough, *As Ships Becalmed at Eve* :

E'en so—but why the tale reveal  
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,  
Brief absence join'd anew to feel,  
Astounded, soul from soul estranged ?

28. a mournful rustling—which found expression in the mournful tones of the speakers.

29-32. Under such conditions the mind is naturally inclined to reverie, and conversation so subdued is easily broken. The leaping and expiring flame diverts the attention from mournful reminiscences of past life, only to fix the sympathies upon kindred themes.

41-4. The various sounds which “mingle vaguely” with their speech,—wind, ocean, and driftwood-fire, each and all speak to them of past wrecks and ventures lost at sea ; hence, instead of breaking harshly in upon the “fancies floating through the brain,” they are rather in sympathetic accord with those reveries whose kindred theme is the long-lost ventures of youth—wrecked friendships and wrecked hopes.

43. In the Middle Ages, when the fortunes of merchant vessels were much more uncertain than at present, the term *venture* was applied to the merchandise and hence also, as here, to the vessel itself.

Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, Act I, Sc. 1.:

Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth  
The better part of my affections would  
Be with my hopes abroad.

46. It was too true that life had its long-lost ventures, the thought of which brought sadness to the mind.

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### RESIGNATION.

Written in 1848. Published in *Seaside and Fireside*, 1850.

*Resignation* was called forth by the death of Longfellow's infant daughter, Frances, who died Sept. 11, 1848, when scarcely one year of age. As the poet's journal for these months indicates, he was deeply affected by her loss.

The thought of the poem falls naturally into three parts, the first four stanzas constituting the introduction, the next seven the main thought of the poem, and the last two the conclusion. The introductory thought, based on scriptural teaching, is a restatement in figurative language, of a very trite truth. In the main body of the poem the author endeavors to raise the thought above the commonplace, by the expansion in concrete form of the idea of the soul's continued growth after death. This theme has been made use of by other poets, notably Browning; but Longfellow in this poem has endeavored to make a more practical use of it than they, by applying it to actual human life as a means of consolation. The last two stanzas draw the inevitable conclusion from the preceding thought and justify *Resignation* as a title for the poem.

POETIC FORM.—*Resignation* may be classified with the *Psalm of Life* as a lyric of reflection. The tone of *Resignation* is, however, more subdued than that of *The Psalm*. This difference of effect is produced partly by the use of the long pentameter lines in *Resignation*, lengthened still further by the use of feminine endings, and partly by the substitution of the iambic measure for the trochaic. Lines 35 and 45 exemplify the usual deviations from the standard foot.

7. Cf. *Matthew* ii, 18: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not."

9-12. Cf. *II. Corinthians*, iv, 17: "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

10. Cf. *earthly damps*, l. 14. Noxious vapors and exhalations from the earth produce disease. Hence the ground is spoken of as the source of evil.

19. *Elysian*—Heavenly; blessed. Elysium, in Greek myth, is the abode of the blessed after death.

25. Cf. Browning, *Old Pictures in Florence*, xxi, xxii:

There's a fancy some lean to, and others hate —  
That when this life is ended, begins  
New work for the soul in another state,  
Where it strives and gets weary, loses and wins:  
Where the strong and the weak, this world's congeries,  
Repeat in large what they practised in small,  
Through life after life in unlimited series;  
Only the scales to be changed, that's all.

Yet I hardly know. When a soul has seen  
By the means of Evil, that Good is best,  
And through earth and its noise, what is heaven's serene,—  
When our faith in the same has stood the test—  
Why, the child grown man, you burn the rod;  
The uses of labor are surely done;  
There remaineth a rest for the people of God:  
And I have had troubles enough, for one.

33-4. the bond which nature gives. Love, the strongest link of connection between parent and child.

Cf. Wordsworth's *Michael*:

Instinctive tenderness, the same  
Blind spirit that is in the blood of all.

51-2. Cf. Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, v.:

I sometimes hold it half a sin  
To put in words the grief I feel.



## THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS.

Longfellow's journal of Oct. 14, 1852, bears the entry: "Copied a poem I have just written, *The Warden of the Cinque Ports*." It was published in *Putnam's Magazine*, January, 1853, and included in the volume of 1858, entitled *The Courtship of Miles Standish, and Other Poems*. The warden was the Duke of Wellington, who died Sept. 14, 1852.

Stedman, in *Poets of America*, comments upon the character of the poem, as follows:

"But neither war nor grief ever too much disturbed the artist soul. Tragedy went no deeper with him than its pathos: it was another element of the beautiful. Death was a luminous transition. *The Warden of the Cinque Ports* is all melody and association. He made a scenic threnody, knowing the laureate would supply an intellectual characterization of the Iron Duke. His fancy dwells upon the ancient and high-sounding title, the mist and sunrise of the channel, and the rolling salute from all those rampart guns, that yet could not arouse the old field-marshal from his slumber. Tennyson fills his grander strophes with the sturdy valor and wisdom of the last great Englishman, but within our own poet's bounds the result is just as undeniably a poem."

The Cinque Ports was the name of an ancient jurisdiction in the south of England, including originally the five ports—as the name Cinque Ports signifies—Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hythe and Dover. To these five, however, two other towns, Winchelsea and Rye, were afterwards added. The jurisdiction of the Cinque Ports was established by Edward the Confessor, and more perfectly organized by William the Conqueror. In return for certain privileges and immunities granted them by the ancient charters, it became the duty of the five ports to contribute almost entirely to the defence of the southern coast. The highest office in connection with the jurisdiction was that of Lord Warden, who, besides being Governor of Dover Castle, was also by virtue of his office, sheriff, lord lieutenant and admiral. The Municipal Reform Bill of 1835 abolished the jurisdiction, so that since that date the office of warden has been entirely honorary. The appointment to the office of warden, however, still confers the right to the free use of Walmer Castle, Kent, the warden's official residence. At the close of 1898 Lord Balfour was appointed Warden of the Cinque Ports in place of the Marquis of Salisbury, resigned.

The Duke of Wellington (1769-1852) was the third son of the Earl of Mornington. He entered the army in 1787, served with distinction in India, and during the struggle with Napoleon successfully conducted the war in the peninsula against the French forces (1808-1814). In 1815 he defeated Napoleon in the decisive battle of Waterloo. In 1828 he resigned the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Army to become Prime Minister. In 1830, on account of his attitude towards the Reform Bill, he was forced to withdraw from the Ministry, and in 1842 was re-appointed Commander-in-Chief. Ten years later, Sept. 14, 1852, he died peacefully at Walmer Castle, Kent, the official residence of the Warden of the Cinque Ports, and was buried with impressive ceremonies in St. Paul's Cathedral.

POETIC FORM.—*The Warden of the Cinque Ports*, like *The Old Clock on the Stairs*, is a lyrical ballad. It will be noticed that the personal element characteristic of the lyric and the simple stirring incident of the ballad are alike lacking. The poem is simply a picturesque description of the conditions attending a certain event. Tennyson's *Ode*, on the other hand, is purely lyrical in the truest sense,—a personal and national expression of deep emotion. In respect to metrical form, what is the effect of the alternation of the long iambic pentameter verses with the short trimeter lines? Is the stanza form suited to the expression of deep feeling? Notice especially and account for the irregularity in length of l. 20.

3. **panel.** A compartment of a wainscot or ceiling, or of the surface of a wall, etc., sometimes enclosing sculptured ornament.

9. Hastings is in the county of Sussex; Sandwich, Romney, Hythe and Dover, are in Kent.

11. In order to pay respect to the English nation in their bereavement.

13-16. A suggestion of the ancient hostility of France and England.

13. **couchant.** Lying down as if ready to spring.

21. **the burden.** The refrain; the repetition of the "morning salutations."

23. The Duke of Wellington was appointed Warden of the Cinque Ports in 1829.

27. **embrasure.** An opening in a wall or parapet, through which guns are pointed and fired.

29. **an eye impartial.** *Impartial* because in the pursuance of duty.

31. **Field-marshal.** An officer of the highest military rank in the British, German, and some other European armies. The rank is often merely nominal. The Duke of Wellington was appointed Field-marshal in England in 1812, and in Austria, Prussia and Russia in 1818.

34. Cf. Tennyson's description of Death in *Gareth and Lynette*:

High on a night-black horse, in night-black arms,  
With white breast-bone, and barren ribs of Death.  
And crown'd with fleshless laughter—some ten steps—  
In the half light—thro' the dim dawn—advanced  
The monster, and then paused, and spake no word.

41-4. "On September 14, 1852, the Duke of Wellington died. His end was singularly peaceful. He fell quietly asleep about a quarter past three in the afternoon in Walmer Castle, and he did not wake any more. He was a very old man—in his eighty-fourth year—and his death had naturally been looked for as an event certain to come soon. Yet when it did come thus naturally and peacefully, it created a profound public emotion. . . . On his death, it (the nation) tried to give him such a public funeral as hero never had. The pageant was indeed a splendid and gorgeous exhibition. It was not perhaps very well suited to the temperament and habits of the cold and simple hero to whose honor it was got up. Nor, perhaps, are gorgeous pageants exactly the sort of performance in which, as a nation, England particularly excels. But in the vast, silent, respectful crowd that thronged the London streets—a crowd such as no other city in the world could show—there was better evidence than pageantry or ceremonial could supply, of the esteem in which the living generation held the hero of the last."—*McCarthy, History of Our Own Times.*

45-8. "Longfellow draws but one lesson from his death, and that a stern one. In her decrees, Nature is inexorable. She continues her course untouched by man's joys or sorrows." Compare with this the conclusion of Tennyson's *Ode*, with its conception of death as continued growth rather than utter loss.

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### EXCELSIOR.

Written in 1841. Published in 1841 in the volume entitled *Ballads and Other Poems.*

On his return home from a party one evening, Longfellow noticed in a fragment of a New York newspaper, the seal of New York State, a shield with the rising sun and the motto *Excelsior*. This suggested to

him the idea of the poem, and he jotted the lines as they occurred to him, on the back of a letter from his friend Charles Sumner.

“Imperfect as it is,” says Eric Robertson in his life of Longfellow, “the poem has circulated round the world and will probably so circulate in future ages a *Hymn of Aspiration*.”

In a letter to Mr. H. T. Tuckerman, Longfellow himself gives us his interpretation of the poem as follows :

“I have had the pleasure of receiving your note in regard to the poem *Excelsior*, and very willingly give you my intention in writing it. This was no more than to display in a series of pictures, the life of a man of genius resisting all temptations, laying aside all fears, heedless of all warnings, and pressing on to accomplish his purpose. His motto is *Excelsior*, “Higher.” He passes through the Alpine village, through the rough, cold paths of the world—where the peasants cannot understand him, and where his watchword is an unknown tongue. He disregards the happiness of domestic peace and sees the glaciers—his fate—before him. He disregards the warnings of the old man’s wisdom and the fascination of woman’s love. He answers to all, “Higher yet.” The monks of St. Bernard are the representatives of religious forms and ceremonies, and with their oft-repeated prayer mingles the sound of his voice telling them there is something higher than forms or ceremonies. Filled with these aspirations, he perishes without having reached the perfection he longed for ; and the voice heard in the air is the promise of immortality and progress ever upward.

“You will perceive that *Excelsior*, an adjective of the comparative degree, is used adverbially—a use justified by the best Latin writers.”

Finding that he was wrong in his contention regarding the adverbial use of *Excelsior*, Longfellow afterwards had recourse to another explanation and attempted to justify the form as an ellipsis for the sentence, “*Scopus meus excelsior est.*”

POETIC FORM.—In *Excelsior* we find an adaptation of the Ballad form, for the purpose of giving expression to a modern thought. In the incident of *Excelsior* considered by itself we find little of absorbing interest ; the manifest absurdity and improbability of the action is an immediate bar to our full sympathy. In the consideration of the allegorical meaning of the story, however, and in the spirit of aspiration to which it gives expression, the sympathies of the reader are at once enlisted. How does the use of rhyming iambic tetrameter couplets



harmonize with the sentiment of the poem? What is the effect of the continued repetition of *Excelsior* as a refrain?

16. the Pass. The Pass of St. Bernard. See l. 32.

Stanzas 3, 4, 6, Cf. Matthew Arnold, *Rugby Chapel*.

We, we have chosen our path -  
 Path to a clear purposed goal,  
 Path of advance!—but it leads  
 A long, steep journey, through sunk  
 Gorges, o'er mountains in snow.  
 Cheerful, with friends, we set forth—  
 Then, on the height, comes the storm.  
 Thunder crashes from rock  
 To rock, the cataracts reply;  
 Lightnings dazzle our eyes;  
 Roaring torrents have breach'd  
 The track, the stream-bed descends  
 In the place where the wayfarer once  
 Planted his footsteps—the spray  
 Boils o'er its borders!—aloft,  
 The unseen snow-beds dislodge  
 Their hanging ruin!—alas,  
 Havoc is made in our train!  
 Friends, who set forth at our side  
 Falter, are lost in the storm.

32. St. Bernard. A famous mountain pass in the Pennine Alps, 8,000 feet above the sea level. At its crest, on the edge of a small lake frozen over nine months out of twelve, stands the *hospice*, founded in 962 by Bernard de Menthon, a Savoyard gentleman, for the benefit of pilgrims to Rome. It is said to be the highest habitation in Europe. It is inhabited by ten or twelve monks of the Order of St. Augustine, whose duty it is to give shelter to travellers, and, assisted by their famous dogs of the St. Augustine breed, to rescue those who are in danger. It is estimated that eight or nine thousand travellers annually take advantage of their hospitality.

34. the startled air. The keen cry breaks in upon the settled stillness of the mountain height.

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#### THE BRIDGE.

Written in 1845: published in 1846 in *The Belfry of Bruges and other Poems*.

Longfellow's journal of 1845 contains the following entries: "Oct. 9, Finished 'The Bridge over the Charles.' Oct. 17, Retouched 'The Bridge.'"



Two entries in the journal of 1838, seven years before the poem was written, are also of interest.

“March 12. Went [to Boston] to see Vandenhoff perform ‘King Lear.’ As I walked out over the bridge the rising moon shone through the misty air. The reflection of the stars in the dark water looked like sparks of fire. Stood still to hear the soft sound of the dissolving ice-cakes in the brine—a low and musical sound, a gentle simmering like the foaming of champagne.”

“March 15. I always stop on the bridge; tide waters are beautiful. From the ocean up into the land they go like messengers to ask why tribute has not been paid. The brooks and rivers answer that there has been little harvest of snow this year. Floating seaweed and kelp is carried up into the meadows as returning sailors bring oranges in bandanna handkerchiefs to friends in the country.”

Longfellow uses the bridge for poetic material, not for any intrinsic beauty in the object itself, but for its personal associations, and for the picturesqueness and symbolism of its surroundings. The poem is descriptive of two moods which are in direct contrast to each other—the mood of the past, restless, longing, rebellious, and the mood of the present, subdued, patient, and sympathetic, both moods tinged with a shade of melancholy. It is characteristic of Longfellow that he passes abruptly from the one mood to the other without attempting to assign reasons for the change, although, indeed, the poem does suggest that it is due to the subduing influence of time alone. The purely descriptive element in stanzas 1-5 not only serves the purpose of supplying a picturesque background for the poem proper, but also aids in putting the feelings of the reader into immediate sympathy with the prevailing sentiment of the poet. The last two stanzas, in harmony with, and suggesting perhaps the secret of, the poet's sympathetic mood, form a pleasing conclusion for the poem.

POETIC FORM.—*The Bridge* is a simple lyric, similar both in tone and in metrical form to *The Day is Done*, and containing metrical irregularities of a similar nature.

1. the bridge. Over the River Charles, between Cambridge and Boston.

3-4. Cf. Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, cxxxi :

And last the dance; till I retire :  
Dumb is that tower which spake so loud,  
And high in heaven the streaming cloud,  
And on the downs a rising fire<sup>1</sup>

11. **flaming furnace.** The flames from the funnels or chimneys of the foundries. In the manufacturing districts of England and Scotland numbers of these fires may still be seen. By night they present a very picturesque appearance, as they are visible for many miles.

18. **belated.** Late ; delayed until late, especially at night time.

29-32. Cf. Longfellow, *To the River Charles*, St. iv :

Oft in sadness and in illness,  
I have watched thy current glide,  
Till the beauty of its stillness  
Overflowed me like a tide.

57-60. Cf. stanzas ii and iv.

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### A GLEAM OF SUNSHINE.

Written, probably, in 1846. Published in the same year in *The Belfry of Bruges and other Poems*.

An entry in Longfellow's journal, dated August 31, 1846, contains a reference to the poem, which not only suggests its recent composition, but also helps us to identify some of the details of scene:—

“The last day of summer. Began my college work. Classes unusually large. In the afternoon a delicious drive with F. and C. through Brookline, by the church and ‘the green lane,’ and homeward through a lovelier lane, with barberries and wild vines clustering over the old stone walls.”

As Brookline is a residential suburb of Boston, it is probable that Boston is the *town* mentioned in Stanza 3. It has been conjectured that *highway* refers to Western Avenue, that the *church* mentioned in line 11 is the Unitarian church of Brookline, and that line 12 has reference to Miss Frances Appleton, daughter of Mr. Nathan Appleton, of Boston, to whom Longfellow was married in 1843.

The three poems, *The Bridge*, *The Fire of Driftwood*, and *A Gleam of Sunshine*, have much in common, in that they all deal with the memories of the past. Thoughts of the past are always characterized by a shade of sadness, in the expression of which in words Longfellow is peculiarly felicitous. The present poem merely recalls in detail the emotions and feelings of a single incident of past life, softened and beautified by the passage of time, and rendered more pleasing by its contrast with present care and sadness.

POETIC FORM.—*A Gleam of Sunshine* is a simple love lyric. As is characteristic of Longfellow, however, it does not express strong passion, but rather a shade of sadness, to which is added a touch of reflection. The metre is quite regular, an alternation of iambic tetrameter lines, the second and fourth lines of each quatrain rhyming.

5-8. Years have intervened between the present and the past just as the brook intervenes between the footsteps 'seen on either side.' The present and the past are distinct; the intervening years indistinct. Through these intervening years come the memories of the past to meet the thoughts of the present, just as the footsteps go forward to meet in the centre of the brook.

13. linden-trees. Lime trees.

23-4. Cf. *Lady of the Lake*, Canto I, lines 354-357 :

A foot more light, a step more true,  
Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew ;  
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,  
Elastic from her airy tread.

25-6. Two lines of a hymn, written by Anna Letitia Barbauld, and contained in the Unitarian hymn-book. The stanza in which the lines occur, reads as follows :

Sleep, sleep to-day, tormenting cares  
Of earth and folly born ;  
Ye shall not dim the light that streams  
From this celestial morn.

29-30. Cf. the title of the poem.

31-2. *Genesis* xxviii, 12. "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven : and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."

39. *Ruth the beautiful*. Probably beautiful in character, although it might be inferred from her story in the book of *Ruth*, that physical beauty was also one of her characteristics.

40. The transfiguring fancy of the lover finds in all things an exaltation of his own love. The lover's eye transforms the object of his worship into 'one of God's holy messengers'; the message of the choir finds a ready response in the happiness of the lover's heart ; the 'dusty beam' speaks to him of Jacob's ladder and angels ascending and descending ; 'Ruth, the beautiful' is the very divinity of the lover's thought.

49. *thoughts*. A settled sadness. To such a sadness he refers in *The Bridge*, lines 39-40 :

And only the sorrow of others  
Throws its shadow over me.

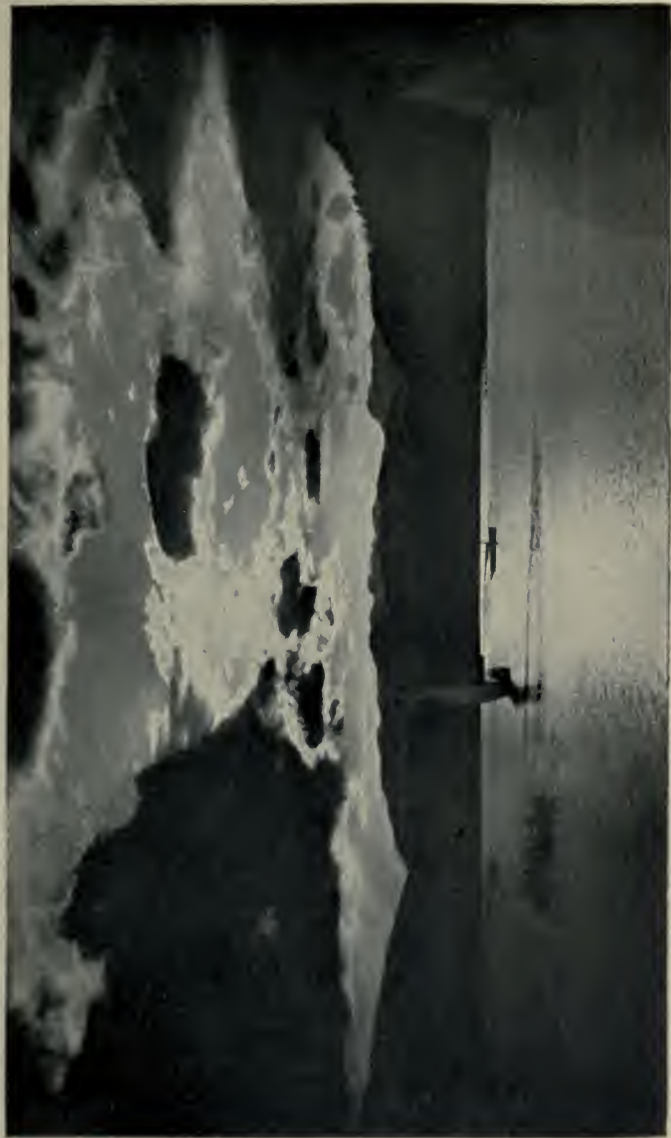
## NOTES ON WORDSWORTH.

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### THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

In didactic purpose, in choice of themes, in versification, in style, in fact in the entire treatment of their subject, the writers of the eighteenth century were at direct variance with the aims and ideals of the poets of the beginning of the nineteenth century. The object which the writers of the former period had in view was rather to instruct the reader and to please his intellect, than to touch the emotions or appeal to the imagination. Hence in the choice of themes they were led to select such subjects as gave free play to the purely intellectual qualities, at the expense of the emotional and imaginative—questions in philosophy, in politics, or indeed such subjects as gave opportunity for the exercise of the qualities of satire and wit. Indeed, in the early half of eighteenth century literature, satire is by far the most prominent species. It is not to be wondered at that such literature was exclusive, and that, as the writer addressed himself principally to the small and cultivated knot of city critics and wits, literature ceased almost entirely to deal with rural life and with the middle and lower classes, but fed upon, and flourished in, the artificial conditions of city life. The literateur of the age of Queen Anne considered the phenomena of nature and the life of the peasant alike, as beneath the dignity of the poetic muse.

In the period immediately following the Restoration the use of the heroic couplet, first brought into favor by Edmund Waller (1605-1687), was generally adopted as the standard measure of English verse,—the form in which the principal poems of Dryden, and Pope, and their followers, were expressed. A mutilated form of the Pindaric ode also became popular early in the period and to some extent shared the honors with the heroic couplet. These two forms of verse, it may be said, the poets of the eighteenth century carried to perfection. The first result of the almost exclusive use of the heroic couplet was to introduce into it an ease and a fineness of polish hitherto unknown in English verse. The constant aim of the writer of the eighteenth century was to express himself, first of all with clearness, and in the second place,



*Windermere by Moonlight.*





with point and smartness of expression. It is this characteristic in the domain of prose, that renders the essay of the age of Queen Anne the best of its kind in English literature.

In the effort, however, to raise the character of poetry above the mean or commonplace, the poets were especially careful to avoid the use of the homely idioms of the language, and all such words and phrases as, in their estimation, might possibly affect the dignity of their work. Hence there came into use a regular conventional vocabulary of stereotyped words and phrases which ran the round of the poets from generation to generation, becoming, no doubt, more hackneyed and meaningless as time went on. The writings of the age abound in classical allusions and figurative language, and in general and abstract, rather than particular and concrete terms. The whole poetic vocabulary was, in short, in the highest degree artificial and lacked in individuality even more than did the subject-matter or thought.

The eighteenth century movement in literature falls naturally into three distinct periods; the period of rise between 1660 and 1700, of which period Dryden (1631-1700) is the most prominent figure; the period of maturity, the age of Queen Anne, during which time Swift (1667-1745) and Pope (1688-1744) jointly held the sceptre; and the period of decline, or later eighteenth century period, dominated by the powerful personality of Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784). It is with the latter, preparing, as it does, the way for the new nineteenth century movement, that this sketch must entirely deal.

Towards the close of the career of Pope, there arose a new generation of poets who began to show in various ways an inclination to depart from the traditions of the dominant school. In 1730, Thompson (1700-1748) published the *Seasons*, which departed from established precedent in two marked respects, viz., in the use of blank verse instead of the heroic couplet and in the introduction of man in humble life, and the general phenomena of nature, as subjects of poetic treatment. In Thompson's *Castle of Indolence* (1748), and in the productions of Collins (1721-1759) and Gray (1716-1771), we observe the beginnings of a finer melody and a truer appreciation of beauty, besides a more minute delineation of nature—a new thing in the literature of the time. Goldsmith (1728-1774), the most important figure in the group which acknowledged the dictatorship of Dr. Samuel Johnson, represents the reaction in favor of the classical school, but his heroic couplets have a simplicity and grace entirely wanting in the earlier verse. Besides this, his own sympathies led him to depict the characters and scenes of

humble life, and most important of all, the reader cannot but feel that the poet is speaking almost entirely from his own personal observation and experience of life.

The five years (1770-1775) marked by the deaths of Gray and of Goldsmith, the last great representatives of eighteenth century ideals, are also the years of birth of Wordsworth (1770), Scott (1771), Coleridge (1772), Southey (1774), and Lamb (1775), the representative figures in the coming romantic movement. The quarter of a century thus intervening between the two movements is largely a period of literary inactivity. Indeed, the ten years following the death of Goldsmith are among the most unproductive in English literature. Nevertheless it was a period of germination. The favorable reception of the works of the fictitious Ossian in 1762, and of the manuscripts of Chatterton in 1768, and above all, of *Percy's Reliques* in 1765, was sufficient evidence of a growing tendency in the literary mind to turn back beyond the cold classicism of Pope and his followers, to the color and sentiment of mediæval romance. These publications, however, represent only one phase of the new tendency in literature. Strictly speaking, the true heralds of the nineteenth century movement did not appear until the decade following the death of Goldsmith. In 1784 Cowper (1731-1800) published *The Task*, while simultaneously Burns (1759-1796) was preparing for publication his first thin volume of songs and lyrics. Crabbe (1754-1832) and Blake (1757-1827) had, in the previous year (1783), given to the world their earliest productions in verse. The productions of Cowper and Burns deal almost entirely with the simple incidents of common life, and, as neither poet aimed primarily to please the world of letters, their poems are, accordingly, the simple expression of their own natural feelings and emotions. The personality of the writer in both cases, becomes, for the first time in the literature of the century, an important element in the poet's work. Cowper brings to his treatment of nature personal love, while, at the same time, having come under the influence of the evangelical movement, he makes his verse a medium of expression of his own personal religion. In the songs and lyrics of Burns, on the other hand, passion—an essentially new thing in the literature of the age—is a predominant quality. But side by side with this runs a companion emotion, which plays an important part in nineteenth century thought and action, viz., a new sympathy with humanity, or, to use the words of the common phrase, a recognition of the brotherhood of man. The work of Crabbe was much more popular in his own generation than in our day, and it is certain that the strong realism in his delineation of humble life had much to

do in shaping the character of much of the poetry of the later school. The simplicity and delicate charm of the simple lyrics of Blake, the visionary engraver, represent, in conclusion, the purely artistic side of the new tendency in literature.

From this imperfect summary it will readily be seen that the poetry of the time was developing certain new characteristics, which may be briefly enumerated as follows:—An increasing interest in mediæval and romantic literature ; choice of themes from nature and humble life ; the introduction of the personal and lyric element into poetry ; the expression of religious fervor, passion, and sympathy for humanity ; a more realistic method of depicting life and nature ; and, in conclusion, the cultivation and elaboration of the finer artistic qualities of verse.

The publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*, in 1798, may be said to mark the end of the transition period, and the true beginning of the Romantic movement. The productions of the poets mentioned in the preceding section indicated an increasing tendency to depart from the aims and ideals of the eighteenth century writers. But these poets wrote, for the most part, in obscurity and isolation, and their work was rather an unconscious departure from former ideals than an intentional and systematic condemnation of the principles of eighteenth century poetry ; and, as we have seen, individual poets exhibited only single and different phases of the new tendency in literature. It remained for the poets of the Romantic movement, in its maturity, to formulate and combine the qualities which were only incidentals to the transition poets, into a poetic theory, and to lead a conscious reaction against the principles of the former school. Such a conscious and premeditated attack upon these principles was sure to find opposition, especially among the critics and literati themselves ; for, though public taste was gradually turning away from the old models, the so-called literary public still clung with tenacity to the established doctrines of the previous age. Hence, as might have been expected, the work of Wordsworth and Coleridge, challenging as it did the accepted theories of poetic art, at first met with opposition from the critical public. In fact, it was not until this generation had passed away and a new generation, whose taste the poets had themselves helped to create, had taken its place, that the true value of the work of Wordsworth and Coleridge in subverting false ideals, and in destroying false tastes came to be finally recognized.

The principal phases of the Romantic movement, in its opposition to the eighteenth century aims and ideals, may be said to be represented

almost in their entirety by the three great contemporary poets of the age, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Scott. The work of Wordsworth is, as asserted by himself in the famous preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, inspired throughout by a philosophic purpose—viz., to elevate and ennoble life by revealing to us the true laws of our being. His themes are chosen, in the main, from nature and humble life; the emotional is given a prominence above the simple narrative and descriptive elements of his work; and the language of his poems is made, in so far as consistent with poetic requirements, to conform to the language of ordinary life. He is the literary descendant, on the one hand, of Cowper and Crabbe—on the other hand, of Burns. But it is, above all, to the puritan Milton, with his consecration of life's common way, that he owes most in moral grandeur and in purity of style. In Coleridge we find combined the new-born love for mediæval ballad literature, associated with mediæval mysticism, together with a wonderful power of producing fine musical effects. Some of the qualities the most striking in Coleridge's work, it will be noticed, had already been shadowed forth in the mysticism and delicate charm of the verse of Blake. Scott, in conclusion, represents more than any other poet of his time, the historical and romantic phases of the new movement. In the romantic scenery and legends of his own country, as well as in the picturesque past as depicted in mediæval ballad and chronicle, he finds material for the modern poetical romance, in which action, character, description, sentiment, and historical interest constitute the chief charm, rather than philosophical truth or fine musical effect.

The qualities and spheres of activity of all three poets, as well as of minor poets representing other phases of the movement, must necessarily overlap to a certain degree; but enough has, perhaps, been said, to indicate to what extent Wordsworth and his contemporaries represented the revolt against eighteenth century conditions, and to set forth his relation to the different forms and phases of what is commonly known as the Romantic Movement.

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*Friar's Crag, Derwentwater.*

## BIOGRAPHY.

At Cockermouth, on the Derwent, at the foot of the Cumberland Highlands, Wordsworth was born April 7th, 1770, the second of a family of five, four brothers and a sister (the self-devoted Dorothy). On both sides he came of that sturdy race largely Norse in origin, which inhabits the Lowlands of Scotland and the northern counties of England, and through both he was connected with the middle territorial gentry. The Wordsworths were settled, the poet tells us, at Peniston in Yorkshire as small landowners "since probably before the Norman Conquest." His grandfather, the first of the family to leave the county, purchased a small estate in Cumberland. Here his father was born and bred to the law, in which capacity he served the Earl of Lonsdale for several years both prior and subsequent to the poet's birth. His mother, Anne Cookson, was the daughter of a Penrith merchant, but her mother, a Crackenthorpe, belonged to an old Westmoreland family of about the same rank in life as the Wordsworths. Both parents were persons of education, refinement and strenuous orderly life, and both though early taken away—his mother in his eighth, and his father in his thirteenth year—left a strong impress on his character. His mother especially possessed, he tells us, a fund

Of modest meekness, simple mindedness,  
A heart that found benignity and hope,  
Being itself benign.

Wordsworth, however, lays no great stress on heredity. Each man is a new creation, a fresh incarnation of the divine spirit, a miracle whose beginning transcends our powers of explanation.

Hard task, vain hope, to analyze the mind,  
If each most obvious and particular thought,  
Not in a mystical and idle sense  
But in the words of reason deeply weighed,  
Hath no beginning.

The importance of early associations in determining his bent is not, however, denied. His inherited energy of nature might have made him a great warrior or administrator, had not circumstances led him early to take an absorbing interest in the forms, colors, sounds and fragrances of the world of nature.

After his mother's death in 1778, William and his elder brother were sent to the Grammar School of Hawkeshead, in the midst of the Lake

District. Nothing could have been more favorable to the development of the poet's peculiar bent. He was allowed to follow his own lead in his reading. His favorite authors were Fielding, La Sage and Smollet, though he could repeat by heart much of Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton. The boys lodged with the cottagers of the village, while their rambles among the hills brought them into close contact with the shepherds and peasants of the district. A healthy and vigorous boy, delighting in mountain rambles, boating, nutting, fishing, and, in the winter, skating, there was, to a careless eye, nothing to indicate the coming poet. But constant association with beautiful and impressive forms was having its effect upon him. He began to be conscious of nature as an awful external presence rebuking injustice and curbing his irregular passions.

Sometimes it befell

In these night wanderings that a strong desire  
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird  
Which was the captive of another's toil  
Became my prey; and *when the deed was done*  
*I heard among the solitary hills*  
*Low breathings coming after me, and sounds*  
Of undistinguishable motion, steps almost as silent  
As the turf they trod.

These fits of vulgar joy and terror were not the pure feeling of such lines as

The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills,

but they were the means employed by nature to build up the vision and the faculty divine. Even at this time, however, there were not wanting flashes of a higher inspiration:

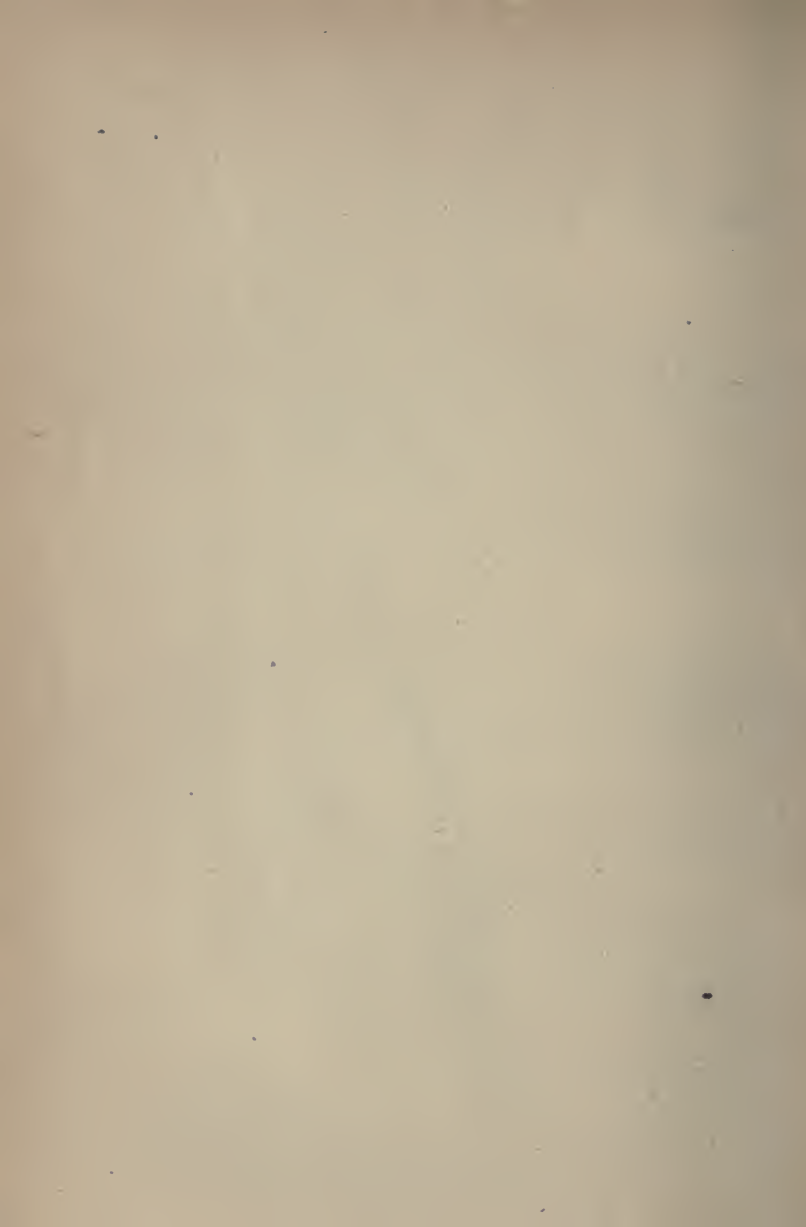
Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy  
Which through all seasons on a child's pursuits  
Are prompt attendants, mid that giddy bliss  
Which like a tempest works along the blood  
And is forgotten; even then I felt  
Gleams like the flashing of a shield; the earth  
And common face of nature spake to me  
Rememberable things.

In 1787 Wordsworth entered Cambridge, from which he graduated in 1791. He could not, he tells us, print the ground where the grass had yielded to the steps of generations of illustrious men, nor mingle with "so many divers samples from the growth of life's sweet season," frequent the rooms once occupied by Spenser and by Milton, nor lie within sight of the antechapel



*Kirkstone Pass : Mountain Scene in the "Lake District."*





Where the statue stood  
Of Newton, with his prism and silent face  
The marble index of a mind forever  
Voyaging through strange seas of thought alone,

without emotion, but college life and labors seemed frivolous after the grave and strenuous peasant life he had known. His college vacations were spent at Hawkeshead, and it was during one of them, when returning from a frolic at early dawn, that the crisis of his life occurred :

The morning rose in memorable pomp,  
The sea lay laughing at a distance ; near  
The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds ;  
And in the meadows and the lower ground  
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn—  
Dews, vapours, and the melodies of birds,  
And labourers going forth to till the fields.  
Ah, need I say dear Friend ! that to the brim  
My heart was full : I made no vows, but vows  
Were then made for me : bond unknown to me  
Was given that I should be, else sinning greatly,  
A dedicated spirit.

The bent of his mind was fixed. He may go back to the University or be temporarily carried away by the fervor of awakened France, but he must in the end return to Nature.

In his third Cambridge vacation he made, with a college friend, a fourteen weeks' tour of Switzerland and the Alps. Returning to Cambridge, he took his degree in January, 1791, and went up to London, where he spent four months. His recorded impressions of the "monstrous ant-hill on the plain of a too busy world," show how numb he had become to life on its great vanity fair side. Careful observation and truthful description, but of such inspiration as we find in his touches of natural description not a gleam. With what a different eye Chaucer, Shakespeare, Burns, Carlyle or Browning would have viewed the grand spectacle of metropolitan life. Wordsworth kept his own centre firm and unshaken, however, rejecting what brought no help to his spirit, but eagerly seizing on all that kept alive his love of simple natural truth.

From London he went to Wales, and from Wales to France, lured forth, as he tells us, by the dramatic spectacle of the Revolution. Like most of the young men of the time, Wordsworth, from the very beginning of the revolutionary movement, manifested a sympathy with the masses in their struggle for freedom. During his pedestrian tour of 1790 in France and Switzerland, and on his return to France in the

autumn of 1791, his role was rather that of a sympathetic spectator than that of an enthusiast. It was not until 1792, when his mind came under the influence of Beaupeuy, himself a man of culture and of noble family, that he became fired with the glow and the enthusiasm of the hour.

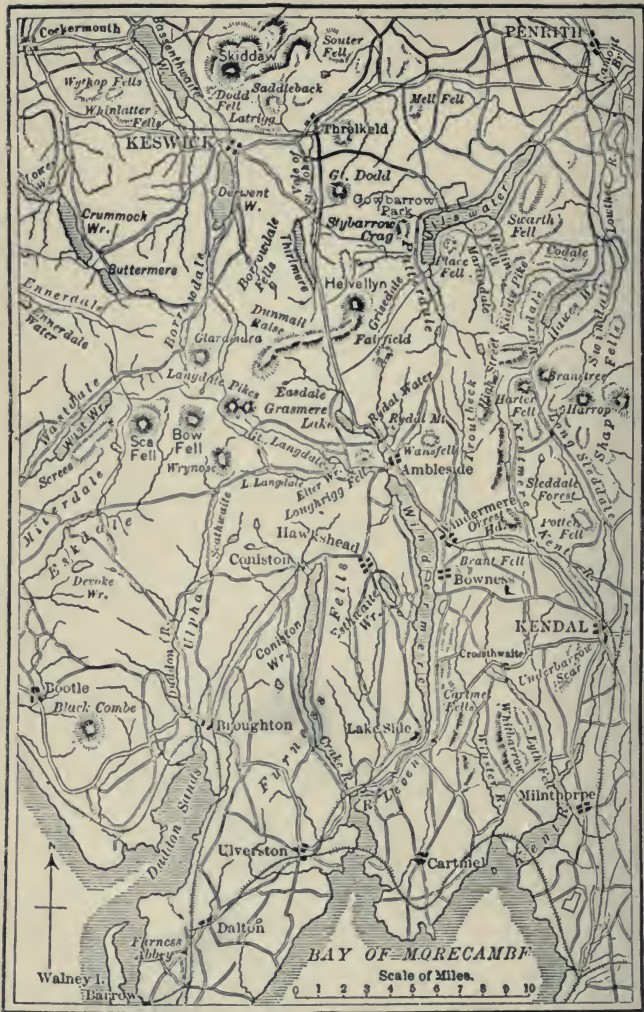
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very heaven!

When recalled to England in December, 1792, his sympathies remained with his revolutionary friends in France. Even the execution of the king, and the fate of the Girondists, though no doubt serving to cool his ardor, failed to excite in him feelings of revulsion, and when, in the war of 1793, "Britain joined the dire array" in the struggle against France, Wordsworth and Coleridge alike rejoiced in the reverses of their native land. Shortly after his return, appeared his first volume of verses, containing *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*, poems interesting principally as exhibiting the struggle of Wordsworth's spirit to free itself from the fetters of the classical tradition of diction and rhythm. Meanwhile the revolutionary party in France had changed their war of self-defence into a war of conquest, for the oppression of liberty, and the advent of Napoleon had brought with it the subjugation of Switzerland and the virtual enslavement of France herself. Wordsworth was naturally very much distressed. For a time he haughtily refused to admit his disappointment, attempting to justify the action of France. A period of scepticism followed, in which he dragged

All precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,  
Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,  
Suspiciously to establish in plain day  
Her titles and her honours; now believing,  
Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed  
With impulse, motive, right and wrong, the ground  
Of obligation, what the rule and whence  
The sanction; till demanding formal proof  
And seeking it in everything, I lost  
All feeling of conviction.

He doubted his mission, thought that his inspiration had deserted him. His bent, however, was too strongly fixed. "The peculiarity of Wordsworth's case," says Professor Alexander, "is that he found healing not in books or in the teachings of others, not in what would be ordinarily called a religious source but in a revelation and healing that came to him direct from visible nature and from contemplating the simple lives of the 'statesmen' and shepherds of his native moun-





The Lake District.



tains. The poet's hopes ceased to centre around any great movement like the French Revolution, and he perceived that not in great political movements but in the domestic life of the simple unsophisticated man, is the true anchor for our faith in humanity and our confidence in the future of the race." Altogether too much stress has been laid on this "defection to the cause of democracy." Shelley mildly deplotes it in his sonnet *To Wordsworth*, while Browning's *Lost Leader* is supposed to be a sorrowful reference to the same thing. In truth there was no such defection. He was just as true a democrat, with just as high a sense of the dignity of mankind as ever, only he had come to place less value on violent and arbitrary movements for reform.

The years 1793 and 1794 were spent in various parts of England, from the Isle of Wight to Keswick in the Lake District. In the latter year he spent some months in Penrith nursing a consumptive friend, Raisley Calvert, in his last illness and planning an entrance into journalism. Calvert, however, seeing promise in the embryo poet, bequeathed to him £900, a sum which, though barely sufficient to place him beyond immediate need, made it possible for the poet to follow the bent of his genius. His sister and he, therefore, took up house in 1795 in Racedown, a secluded hamlet of Dorsetshire, near Bristol, where they remained eighteen months. Their joint income was not more than £60 or £70 a year and many amusing entries in Dorothy's journal refer to the frugal housekeeping of this time. But with plain living went plenty of high thinking and their home both then and later became the Mecca of all the young enthusiastic lovers of the things of the mind.

Dorothy Wordsworth's part in the development of her brother's genius must never be forgotten. She was one of those whom Wordsworth describes as poets lacking only the accomplishment of verse. She was the first to detect and appreciate her brother's gift, and with rare self-devotion consecrated her life to its development.

She whispered still that brightness would return,  
She in the midst of all preserved me still  
A poet, made me seek beneath that name  
And that alone, my office upon earth.

During his residence with his sister, at Racedown, Wordsworth wrote *Guilt and Sorrow*, afterwards published under the title of *The Female Vagrant* and *The Borderers*, a tragedy, several satires in emulation of Juvenal, and a few Spenserian stanzas. These half-hearted and very imperfectly successful attempts revealed to him, at least, his unfitness for satirical and dramatic composition, and were thus part

of the means by which, under his sister's genial influence, he groped his way out of the formalism of the eighteenth century towards a simpler and sincerer style.

What he now needed was the assurance of some friendly outside voice ; and Coleridge opportunely supplied the needed stimulus. Coleridge had seen original poetic genius in the *Descriptive Sketches* and paid a visit to Wordsworth at Racedown. So stimulating was the companionship, that Wordsworth, to be near Coleridge, removed to Alfoxden, near Nether Stowey, in Somerset, under the shadow of the Quantock Hills, and for the next twelve months the two original men were almost constant companions. Wordsworth's style rapidly matured. In response to Coleridge's quick and generous appreciation, ideas, the confused product of years of meditation, ranged themselves in clearer and more appropriate forms. A pedestrian tour through Western England, in 1798, resulted in the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*, Coleridge taking the supernatural themes, Wordsworth endeavoring to give the interest of romance to every-day topics. Coleridge contributed *The Ancient Mariner* and three other pieces ; Wordsworth *We are Seven*, *The Reverie of Poor Susan*, *Tintern Abbey*, *Simon Lee*, *The Thorn*, *The Idiot Boy*, *The Last of the Flock*, *Goody Blake*, *Exposition and Reply*, and *The Tables Turned*. These poems reflect all the higher qualities of the poet's thought ; but the critics, blinded by their admiration for what was then called elevation of style, passed over such lines as

That blessed mood  
In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world  
Is lightened. "

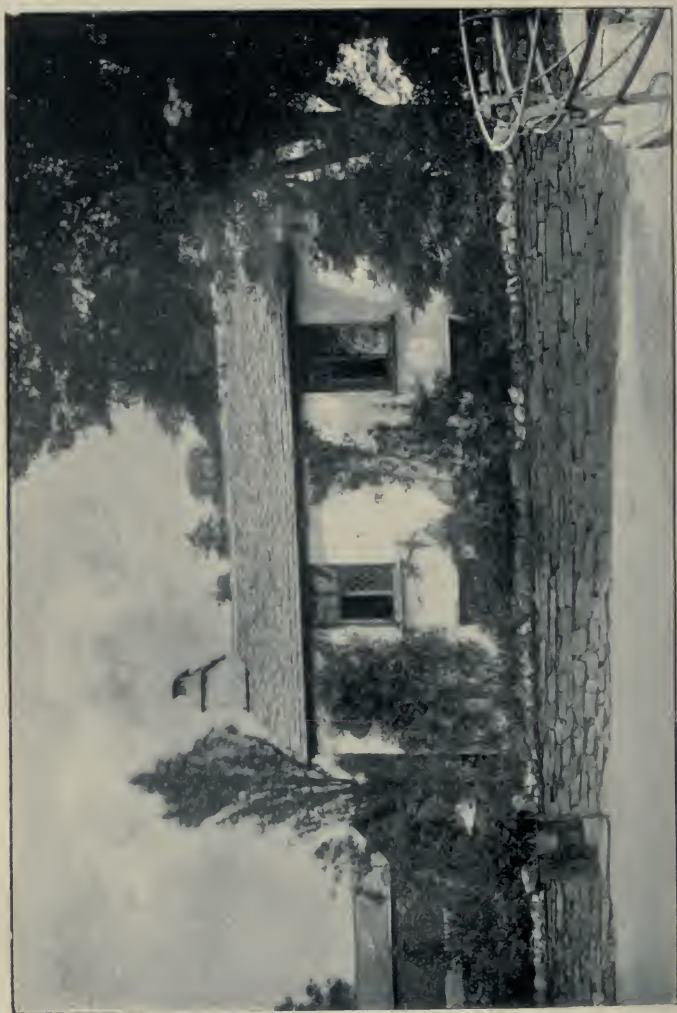
or

I have learned  
To look on nature not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth but, hearing oftentimes  
The still, sad music of humanity.

and derisively seized on lines like

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans.  
"As sure as there's a sun in heaven,"  
Cries Betty, "he'll be back again.  
They'll both be here—'tis almost ten,  
Both will be here before eleven."  
Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans,  
The clock gives warning for eleven.





*Dove Cottage.*  
(Wordsworth's House at Grasmere.)

Wordsworth, his sister and Coleridge, had in the meantime sailed for Germany. The visit had no special influence upon Wordsworth. Coleridge went on to Ratzeburg; the Wordsworths stayed at Goslar on the edge of the Hartz forest where they remained till the following spring. The winter was a severe one even for Germany, and Wordsworth, thrown back upon himself, had occasion to prize his memory. Such stores as silent thought could bring from his own past life or from his conversations with Coleridge, at Alfoxden, were drawn upon for a number of productions of great merit. The *Prelude*, an autobiographical poem in thirteen books, intended as an introduction to a still larger *Excursion* was planned and begun, and here were written, *The Fountain*, *The Poet's Epitaph*, *Ruth*, *Two April Mornings*, *Nutting*, and the series known as the Lucy poems, namely, *Strange Fits of Passion have I known*; *She dwelt among untrodden ways*; *I travelled among unknown men*; *Three years she grew*; and *A slumber did my spirits steal*.

Returning to England in December, 1799, brother and sister settled down in Dove Cottage, Grasmere. Next year a new and enlarged edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* was published, containing, besides many new poems, the famous *Preface*, defining the true theory of poetic diction which so infuriated the critics. The poet had at length acquired the courage of his convictions and did not hesitate to characterize the style of Pope and his followers as stilted and artificial—a glare and glitter of a perpetual yet broken and heterogeneous imagery.

In 1802, Wordsworth and his sister visited France. *Lines on Westminster Bridge*, the first of the splendid series dedicated to national independence and liberty, was composed on the roof of the Dover coach, and *Fair Star of Evening*, *Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee*, *Toussaint*, *Milton thou shouldst be living at this hour*, *It is not to be thought of that the Flood*, *When I have borne in memory what has tamed*, in the course of the tour or shortly after his return. A still more memorable event in the same year roused him to one of his happiest fits of activity. Lord Lonsdale paid to the Wordsworths a long outstanding debt of £8,500, and the poet's share warranted his taking a wife; in October, accordingly, he married his cousin, Mary Hutchinson, whom he had known from childhood, and whose grace and wisdom are celebrated in *She was a Phantom of Delight*. To this time also belong *Alice Fell*, *Beggars*, *My heart leaps up*, *Resolution and Independence*. A tour of Scotland in the following year resulted similarly in *The Highland Girl*, *The Solitary Reaper*, *Stepping Westward*, *At the Grave of Burns*, *Yarrow Unvisited*, *Yarrow Visited* and *Yarrow Revisited*.



In 1805 the Wordsworths removed to Allan Bank, and here were written the *Ode to Duty*, *To the Skylark*, and *The Waggoner*. The *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*, begun three years earlier, was finished in 1806, and in 1807, on removal to the Grasmere parsonage, the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle* and *The White Doe of Rylstone*.

The first or youthful period in Wordsworth's poetical life and work, also called the "golden decade," is generally regarded as coming to an end in 1808. His middle or mature period, 1808-1818, witnessed, besides many minor poems, the completion of his longest poem, the *Excursion*, with its long introduction, the *Prelude*. What principally characterizes his decadence is his stumbling upon a number of serial arrangements of his reflections on nature and human life. *The Sonnets on the River Duddon*, following the river from its source to its mouth, embody his philosophy of nature, the *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* give the history of the church from the time of the Druids, while other such chains are *Memorials of a Tour in Scotland*, *Memorials of a Tour on the Continent*, etc.

In 1812 the poet and his family removed from Grasmere parsonage to Rydal Mount, a short distance from Grasmere, where he continued to live until his death. In 1813 he was appointed Distributor of Stamps for Westmoreland, an office which added £500 a year to his income. Although his works were at first coldly received by a prejudiced public, a discerning few, led by Coleridge, Southey, De Quincey and Arnold of Rugby, read and admired the new vein and worked to insure its popularity with the rising generation, until, as Myers says, between 1830 and 1840, "Wordsworth passed from the apostle of a clique into the most illustrious man of letters in England." In 1840 he received a pension of £300 a year from the government, and on the death of Southey, in 1843, was appointed poet laureate. Seven years later, in 1850, he died, at the age of eighty and was buried amid his family in Grasmere churchyard. His sister, and lifelong companion, Dorothy, became a mental invalid in 1836 and died in 1855 at the age of eighty-four. His wife survived him for nine years. Tennyson's decisive appearance in 1842 marks the floodtide of his popularity. The poetry-reading public more and more forsook Wordsworth for Tennyson and the newer poets until, though his fame is securely established, it has again become necessary to draw attention to the joy and strength to be drawn from his poetry.

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*William Wordsworth.*

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## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MAN.

“He wasn’t a man as said a deal to common folk,” said a Grasmere peasant in answer to an enquirer, “but he talked a deal to hissen.” “He was not a man that folks could crack wi’,” said another, “nor not a man as could crack wi’ folks.”

“I have known him nearly twenty years, and for about that time intimately. The strength and character of his mind you see in *The Excursion*, and his life does not belie his writings; for in every relation in life and point of view he is a truly exemplary and admirable man.” Southey.

“During the last seven or ten years of his life, Wordsworth felt himself to be a recognized lion in certain considerable London circles, and was in the habit of coming up to town with his wife for a month or two every season to enjoy his quiet triumph and collect his bits of tribute *tales quales*. Wordsworth took his bit of lionism very quietly, with a smile sardonic rather than triumphant, and certainly got no harm by it, if he got or expected little good. For the rest, he talked well in his way; with veracity, easy brevity, and force, as a wise tradesman would of his tools and workshop, and as no unwise one could. His voice was good, frank and sonorous, though practically clear, distinct, and forcible rather than melodious; the tone of him business-like, sedately confident: no discourtesy, yet no anxiety about being courteous. A fine, wholesome-rusticity, fresh as his mountain breezes, sat well on the stalwart veteran, and on all he said and did. You would have said he was usually a taciturn man; glad to unlock himself to audience sympathetic and intelligent, when such offered itself. His face bore marks of much, not always peaceful, meditation; the look of it not bland or benevolent so much as close, impregnable and hard, a man *multa tacere loquive paratus*, in a world where he had experienced no lack of contradictions as he strode along. The eyes were not very brilliant, but they had a quiet clearness; there was enough of brow, and well-shaped; rather too much of cheek (“horse-face,” I have heard satirists say); face of squarish shape, and decidedly longish, as I think the head itself was (its “length” going horizontal); he was large-boned, lean, but still firm-knit, tall, and strong-looking when he stood, a right good old steel-grey figure, with rustic simplicity and dignity about him, and a vivacious strength looking through him which might have suited one of those old steel-grey markgrafs whom Henry the Fowler set up to ward the ‘marches’ and do battle with the intrusive heathen in a stalwart and judicious manner.” Carlyle’s *Reminiscences*.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS POETRY.

Wordsworth's represents more strongly than any other poetry, the reaction against the eighteenth century forms and ideals. The general life and thought of the eighteenth century had not been characterized by any depth of feeling or genuineness of emotion, and the work of the poets of the so-called classical school fairly reflected the character of the age. Their poetry is largely didactic, intended to instruct or to please the intellect, rather than to appeal to the imagination and the emotions of men. Hence, the poets of the time wrote consciously for the entertainment rather of the literati, than of the common people. In so doing, they were naturally led to deal with the life of the city as opposed to rural life, and to the life of man in society as opposed to the humbler walks of life. As a result, furthermore, of this effort to please a critical public, form came to be considered as of more importance than matter. The poet was content with a superficial treatment of his subject, and gave no thought to the spiritual aspect of his theme. His chief care was to maintain the dignity of his verse. As a consequence, he had recourse to conventional stereotyped expressions, to classical imagery, and to figurative language, and avoided the natural language of common life; and, furthermore, as the rhyming heroic couplet gave a certain point and smartness to the expression it came to be used more largely than any other form of verse.

Wordsworth, in the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, set forth his theory of poetry, as opposed to that of the Classical School, under three main heads. He therein declared, (1) that each of his poems had a purpose, to trace in incidents and situations "the primary laws of our nature;" hence, he went to humble and rustie life, and to nature herself for his art; (2) that the action and situation should be only *secondary* to feeling; hence, the profoundly emotional nature of his work; (3) that the language of poetry differs from that of prose only by the use of metre; hence, in some of even his best work we find the actual language of daily life, not, however, the language of men in the pursuance of their ordinary duties; but rather the language of their impassioned moods. This preface, with some slight modifications, constituted Wordsworth's life-long poetic creed, and it will at once be seen, that in following out these three fundamental principles therein stated, he deliberately broke with the old traditions and became the recognized leader of the new movement in literature.







*Rydal Water.*

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The early poems of Wordsworth are indeed as regards the nineteenth century, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the Way.'" The French Revolution was indeed an indication of the tendencies of the times and it pointed unmistakably to two great nineteenth century movements, viz., the search for liberty and the rise of democracy. In a special sense, Wordsworth, himself a child of the Revolution, gives voice to these two dominant ideas. Freedom, as nature herself is free, is everywhere considered the prime condition of true living: and as to democracy, it is through the illiterate, the half-witted, the very humblest of mankind, that he illustrates the primary laws of existence. Wordsworth is, moreover, in a sense, the fore-runner of the great scientific movement of the nineteenth century; for in his minuteness of observation and in his rigid adherence to truth he certainly foreshadows the scientific method of the present age.

No simpler or more appreciative estimate of Wordsworth exists than Matthew Arnold's: "The cause of its greatness is simple, and may be told quite simply. Wordsworth's poetry is great because of the extraordinary power with which Wordsworth feels the joy offered to us in nature, the joy offered to us in the simple primary affections and duties; and because of the extraordinary power with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy, and renders it so as to make us share it.

"The source of joy from which he thus draws is the truest and most unfailing source of joy accessible to man. It is also accessible universally. Wordsworth brings us word, therefore, according to his own strong and characteristic line, he brings us word

Of joy in widest commonality spread.

Here is an immense advantage for a poet. Wordsworth tells of what all seek, and tells of it at its truest and best source, and yet a source where all may go and draw for it.

"Nevertheless, we are not to suppose that everything is precious which Wordsworth, standing even at this perennial and beautiful source, may give us. Wordsworthians are apt to talk as if it must be. They will speak with the same reverence of *The Sailor's Mother*, for example, as of *Lucy Gray*. They do their master harm by such lack of discrimination. *Lucy Gray* is a beautiful success; *The Sailor's Mother* is a failure. To give aright what he wishes to give, to interpret and render successfully, is not always within Wordsworth's own command. It is within no poet's command; here is the part of the Muse, the

inspiration, the God, the 'not ourselves.' In Wordsworth's case, the accident, for so it may almost be called, of inspiration, is of peculiar importance. No poet, perhaps, is so evidently filled with a new and sacred energy when the inspiration is upon him; no poet, when it fails him, is so left 'weak as is a breaking wave.' I remember hearing him say that 'Goethe's poetry was not inevitable enough.' The remark is striking and true; no line in Goethe, as Goethe said himself, but its maker knew well how it came there. Wordsworth is right, Goethe's poetry is not inevitable; not inevitable enough. But Wordsworth poetry, when he is at his best, is inevitable, as inevitable as Nature herself. It might seem that Nature not only gave him the matter for his poem, but wrote his poem for him. He has no style. He was too conversant with Milton not to catch at times his master's manner, and he has fine Miltonic lines; but he has no assured poetic style of his own, like Milton. When he seeks to have a style he falls into ponderosity and pomposity. In the *Excursion* we have his style, as an artistic product of his own creation; and although Jeffrey completely failed to recognize Wordsworth's real greatness, he was yet not wrong in saying of the *Excursion*, as a work of poetic style: 'This will never do.' And yet magical as is that power, which Wordsworth has not, of assured and possessed poetic style, he has something which is an equivalent for it.

"Every one who has any sense for these things feels the subtle turn, the heightening, which is given to a poet's verse by his genius for style. We can feel it in the

After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well—

of Shakespeare; in the

. . . . . though fall'n on evil days,  
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues—

of Milton. It is the incomparable charm of Milton's power of poetic style which gives such worth to *Paradise Regained*, and makes a great poem of a work in which Milton's imagination does not soar high. Wordsworth has in constant possession, and at command, no style of this kind; but he had too poetic a nature, and had read the great poets too well, not to catch, as I have already remarked, something of it occasionally. We find it not only in his Miltonic lines; we find it in such a phrase as this, where the manner is his own, not Milton's—

. . . the fierce confederate storm  
Of sorrow barricaded evermore  
Within the walls of cities;

although even here, perhaps, the power of style, which is undeniable, is more properly that of eloquent prose than the subtle heightening and change wrought by genuine poetic style. It is style, again, and the elevation given by style, which chiefly makes the effectiveness of *Laodameia*. Still the right sort of verse to choose from Wordsworth, if we are to seize his true and most characteristic form of expression, is a line like this from *Michael*:—

And never lifted up a single stone.

There is nothing subtle in it, no heightening, no study of poetic style, strictly so called, at all; yet it is expression of the highest and most truly expressive kind.

“Wordsworth owed much to Burns, and a style of perfect plainness, relying for effect solely on the weight and force of that which with entire fidelity it utters, Burns could show him.

The poor inhabitant below  
Was quick to learn and wise to know,  
And keenly felt the friendly glow  
And softer flame;  
But thoughtless follies laid him low  
And stain'd his name.

Every one will be conscious of a likeness here to Wordsworth; and if Wordsworth did great things with this nobly plain manner, we must remember, what indeed he himself would always have been forward to acknowledge, that Burns used it before him.

“Still Wordsworth’s use of it has something unique and unmatched. Nature herself seems, I say, to take the pen out of his hand, and to write for him with her own bare, sheer, penetrating power. This arises from two causes: from the profound sincereness with which Wordsworth feels his subject, and also from the profoundly sincere and natural character of his subject itself. He can and will treat such a subject with nothing but the most plain, first-hand, almost austere naturalness. His expression may often be called bald, as, for instance, in the poem of *Resolution and Independence*; but it is bald as the bare mountain tops are bald, with a baldness which is full of grandeur.

“Wherever we meet with the successful balance, in Wordsworth, of profound truth of subject with profound truth of execution, he is unique. His best poems are those which most perfectly exhibit this balance. I have a warm admiration for *Laodameia* and for the great *Ode*; but if I am to tell the very truth, I find *Laodameia* not wholly



free from something artificial, and the great *Ode* not wholly free from something declamatory. If I had to pick out poems of a kind most perfectly to show Wordsworth's unique power, I should rather choose poems such as *Michael*, *The Fountain*, *The Highland Reaper*. And poems with the peculiar and unique beauty which distinguishes these Wordsworth produced in considerable number."

### Chronological Table of Works with Dates of Publication.

[It must be noted that the order here given is only approximately correct in the case of several longer poems and compilations whose production was the work of years.]

Evening Walk .....	}	1793
Descriptive Sketches.....		
The Female Vagrant .....		
The Borderers .....		1795
Lyrical Ballads (First Edition).....		1798
Lyrical Ballads (Second Edition).....		1800
Memorials of a Tour in Scotland.....		1803
Poems ... ..		1807
Prose Pamphlets.....		1809
The Excursion .....	}	1814
Memorials of a Tour in Scotland.....		
The White Doe of Rylstone.....		1815
Thanksgiving Ode.....		1816
Peter Bell .....	}	1819
The Waggoner.....		
Sonnets on the River Duddon....		1820
Memorials of a Tour on the Continent .....		1820, 22
Ode—Intimations of Immortality.....		(?)
Miscellaneous Sonnets.....		
Ecclesiastical Sketches.....	}	1822
Description of the Scenery of the Lakes.....		
Yarrow Re-visited and Other Poems .....		1834
Minor Pieces.....		
Ode on Installation of Prince Albert.....		1847
Prelude .....		1850



*Grasmere Church.*



## THE EDUCATION OF NATURE.

This poem, composed in the Hartz Forest in 1799, and published in 1800 in the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, is the fourth of a series of five poems addressed to the unknown "Lucy." Of the five poems on "Lucy," Mr. A. J. George says: "They are genuine love poems, and yet how far removed from that species of love-poetry which encourages vulgar curiosity, or the parade of the inmost sanctuary of the heart. All that is given us is that Lucy once lived, is now no more."

Children of a larger growth, you see, have liked to believe that the poem commemorated the love and beauty and early death of an actual Lucy known to Wordsworth, and pupils are not to be blamed for asking the question, but there is, says Knight, no evidence for any such view. The poems are expressions of ideal love, and the intensity of feeling in many of the lines proves only the energy of the poet's imagination, which thus bodies forth the forms of things unknown and gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name.

The poem gives expression to the poet's belief that nature in her various phases not only influences the character of man, but also moulds into beauty his physical form. In the interpretation of the poem it will be noticed, in the first place, that the conditions under which nature works are ideal. The life of the three year old child has hitherto been free, and when nature takes her into her care 'a lovelier flower on earth was never sown.' In the second place nature performs a two-fold function, supplying the *impulse* to kindle the emotions and the sense of the controlling power of *law* to restrain them. In contrast to the active life of the fawn kindling the impulses, stands the restraining repose of flower and tree, mountain, stone and heath, of 'mute insensate things;' thus stanza three explains and illustrates the effect of the two-fold influence of law and impulse. "The fourth stanza," says Dowden, "tells of the education of visible beauty; the fifth of impulses from sound; the sixth, of the vital joy communicated by nature." In the last stanza the poet tells of how nature, ever inexorable, characteristically completes her work, cutting down "the loveliest flower" in its fullest beauty. The life and death of Lucy, however, the poet suggests, have not been without an influence of their own. Notice, too, finally, "the heath, the calm, and quiet scene," in keeping with the subdued nature of the lover's grief.

It is interesting to compare this poem with Shelley's solution of a somewhat similar problem in the *Sensitive Plant*, or with Longfellow's

*Resignation.* Longfellow offers the mourner only the familiar common-places of consolation—reunion with the loved one in heaven. Shelley tells him that death is a mockery, that the loved one has merely become one with nature, is a presence still to be loved and known, “spreading itself where'er that power may move which has withdrawn his being to its own,” that our human organs of perception only are at fault, that 'tis we, 'tis ours are changed,” not those who are gone. One is hackneyed, the other fanciful; neither can be verified. Wordsworth's exquisite rightness, as Ruskin calls it, is shown in his giving us nothing that does not rest on experience. Whatever may be said of the life beyond the grave, of one truth Wordsworth is certain, that “the dead and the distant, while we long for them and mourn for them, are as truly present as the floor we stand on.”

THE SUB-TITLE.—*The Education of Nature* is a sub-title given by Palgrave when selecting the poem for *The Golden Treasury*.

1. **Three years.** Favorite ballad number.

3. **Sown.** Compare “Here scattered like a random seed” in *The Highland Girl*.

6. **lady.** True culture is natural, not artificial. See *The Influence of Natural Objects*, for the poet's view of the moral and spiritual grandeur of nature's teaching.

7.-8. In the second edition of the poem, in 1802, Wordsworth tried the effect of the following variation :

Her teacher I myself will be,  
She is my darling ; and with me.

Three years later he restored the lines as here.

8. **law and impulse.** A sense of order as well as quick and eager visitings of thought and feeling. “Nature is all sufficient, both as a moral law to restrain from evil and as an inspiration to rouse to active good.” Webb.

11. **feel an overseeing power.** Implicitly rather than distinctly conscious of an august presence. “I think we cannot doubt of one main conclusion, that though the absence of a love of nature is not an assured condemnation, its presence is an invariable sign of goodness.”—Ruskin's *Modern Painters*. Wordsworth himself in *Tintern Abbey* says :

Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy :



And again,

I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things.

12. To kindle or restrain. Compare law and impulse.

13. sportive as the fawn. Nature's influences contribute to the human character a cheerful, buoyant liveliness. Compare *Ruth* :

And when he chose to sport and play,  
No dolphin ever was so gay  
Upon the tropic sea.

14. lawn. An open space, especially in a wood. A glade.

16. breathing balm. Is "breathing" an active participle used passively? Does it refer to the restorative influence of nature or of Lucy upon those whom she met.

18. mute insensate things. No thought is so constantly active in Wordsworth's conception of nature's influence as that of the calming and soothing influence of her great silences. Compare *Song from the Feast at Brougham Castle* :

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;  
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,  
The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lowly hills.

23. Grace that shall mould. Here, too, the poet debated the comparative merit of different forms. "A beauty that shall mould her form," was the reading of the first edition. In this case, second thoughts were best. The edition of 1802 contained the lines as we have them since.

24. silent sympathy. Unconscious adjustment to her environment.

26. lean her ear. To catch the subtle, almost inaudible tones of nature : compare "The harvest of a quiet eye."

27. secret place. Compare with "The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

31. vital feelings of delight. "Vital feelings of delight," observe. There are deadly feelings of delight ; but the natural ones are vital,

necessary to very life. And they must be feelings of delight if they are to be vital. Do not think you can make a girl lovely if you do not make her happy." Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies*.

37. The work was done. Lucy's education was completed. Hers was now

A countenance in which did meet,  
Sweet records, promises as sweet.

41-2. Compare with Browning's *Abt Vogler* :

Never to be again ! But many more of its kind  
As good, nay, better perchance ; is this your comfort to me ?  
To me who must be saved because I cling with my mind  
To the same, same self, same love, same God ; aye, what was, shall be.

### SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

This poem was written in 1804 at Town-end, Grasmere ; published in 1807, and addressed to Wordsworth's wife, Mary Hutchinson. "The germ of the poem," says Wordsworth, "was four lines composed as part of the *Verses on the Highland Girl*. Though beginning in this way, it was written from my heart as is sufficiently obvious."

The plan of the poem is simple. Each stanza is used to describe a single phase of the writer's appreciation of the various qualities of an ideal woman. In the first stanza the poet describes those superficial and attractive qualities, mostly physical, due for the most part to the life and vivacity of youth. The descriptive terms, *phantom*, *apparition*, *shape*, *image*, themselves suggest the elusive charm of youth, while the suggestions as to her personal appearance are made all the more striking by the use of imagery borrowed direct from the beauty of nature herself.

The second stanza advances a step farther into the life of the poet's ideal. She has already charmed the fancy ; further acquaintance, while not robbing her of this charm, enables us to see something of the emotional life, qualities more practical and more stable, united with the former. Yet, to be an ideal woman she must not be entirely without fault.

Who loves me must have a touch of earth.  
He is all fault who has no fault at all.

The last stanza reveals to us the more substantial elements of character, qualities of soul rather than qualities of heart. These qualities, as a general thing, are brought into prominence when the

passage of time brings with it the subduing influence of sorrow—when the earlier impulses of youth have passed away. It must be noted in reading this stanza that the ideal woman, having reached her highest state of development, does not lose those qualities which charm the fancy and appeal to the heart. She is “a perfect woman,” and “yet a spirit still.”

Cf. *The Prelude*, xiv, ll. 268-271 :

She came no more a phantom to adorn  
A moment, but an inmate of the heart.  
And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined  
To penetrate the lofty and the low.

“The three stanzas of this poem,” says Webb, “represent woman under three aspects. In the first she is depicted as an ideally beautiful and entrancing object in man’s eyes; in the second, as the pleasant companion of his every-day life; in the third, as an intellectual and moral being, fitted to be his adviser and comforter.”

4. “To fill but one single moment with beauty too bright and ethereal to last.” Turner.

5-8. “Her eyes and hair were dark, her complexion fair, and her disposition cheerful.”

Cf. Byron, *She Walks in Beauty* :

She walks in beauty, like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
And all that’s best of dark and bright  
Meet in her aspect and her eyes,  
Thus mellowed to that tender light  
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

15-6. “The perfect loveliness of a woman’s countenance can consist only in that majestic peace which is founded in the memory of happy and useful years,—full of sweet records; and from the joining of this with that yet more majestic childishness, which is still full of change and promise;—opening always—modest at once, and bright, with the hope of better things to be won, and to be bestowed.” Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies*.

17-8. Cf. *Her Only Pilot*, ll. 12-14 :

While here sits one whose brightness owes its hues  
To flesh and blood; no goddess from above,  
No fleeting spirit, but my own true love.

22. “The very pulse of the machine” has been an offence to some lovers of this poem. Does Wordsworth mean by machine merely the

body, as Hamlet does in his signature of the letter to Ophelia, "Thine whilst this machine is to him? I rather think the whole woman with all her household routine is conceived as the organism of which the thoughtful soul is the animating principle."—Dowden. Since Wordsworth's time the word *machine* has become more limited and purely technical in its signification.

24. Passing through life with a due sense of its meaning and its responsibilities.

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### A LESSON.

This is the last of three poems addressed to the celandine, written in 1802 and published together in 1807. In the first two, written on April 30th and May 1st, 1802, the poet expresses much more strongly his personal love for, and joy in, the flower. Here we catch what is rare in Wordsworth—a despondent note. The poet finds in the life of the flower that which makes it a type of the lot of human kind. As the celandine in the early year possesses sufficient vitality not only to defend itself from storm but also to avail itself of the gifts of nature, the sunshine and the dew, so does man receive the varied gifts which youth bestows so prodigally upon him. But in the case of the flower, the season comes when it no longer has sufficient strength to protect itself as of old; so also man, with early joys and enthusiasms, powers and faculties dissipated, becomes in old age a pensioner to whom nature deals out her joys with niggard hand.

THE TITLE.—Again an invention of Palgrave, in *Golden Treasury*.

1. *the lesser celandine*. So called to distinguish it from the *chelidonium majus*, or greater celandine. It is more generally known as the common pilewort, or swallow-wort. It is a small, yellow flower, a sort of buttercup, with star-shaped blossoms and glossy green leaves. It is one of the earliest flowers of the spring-time.

2-4. Cf. the second poem to the same flower, ll. 33-40:

Blithe of heart, from week to week  
 Thou dost play at hide and seek;  
 While the patient primrose sits  
 Like a beggar in the cold,  
 Thou, a flower of wiser wits,  
 Slipp'st into thy sheltering hold  
 Liveliest of the vernal train  
 When ye all are out again.

13. inly muttered. Why inly muttered ?

20. in my spleen. The spleen, an organ of the body, formerly regarded as the seat of the passions; hence ill-humor. In his ill-humor and discontent with the conditions of life, it is a source of melancholy satisfaction to the poet to find another whose lot is as unfortunate as his own.

Cf. *Resolution and Independence*, st. xx, for an expression of the opposite mood.

I could have laughed myself to scorn to find  
In that decrepit man so firm a mind.

21-2. a prodigal. Youth.

a miser. Old age.

pensioner. A dependant.

Magnus explains that pensioners were "attached to a district and personally supported by gifts in kind," and adds that the institution is "now almost extinct."

Compare with the sentiments expressed in the poem that of the following passages :

Grow old along with me ;  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life for which the first was made.

Browning, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*.

So fares it still in our decay,  
And yet the wiser mind  
Mourns less for what age takes away  
Than what it leaves behind.

Wordsworth, *The Fountain*.

Far from the world I walk and from all care ;  
But there may come another day to me,  
Solitude, pain of heart, distress and poverty.

Wordsworth, *Resolution and Independence*.

We will walk through life in such a way  
That, when time brings on decay,  
Now and then I may possess  
Hours of perfect gladness.

And have faculties to take  
Even from things by sorrow wrought,  
Matter for a jocund thought,  
Spite of care and spite of grief  
To gambol with Life's falling leaf.

Wordsworth, *The Kitten and Falling Leaves*.



We will grieve not, rather find  
 Strength in what remains behind ;  
 In the primal sympathy  
 Which having been must ever be,  
 In the soothing thoughts that spring  
 Out of human suffering,  
 In the faith that looks through death,  
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

Wordsworth, *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*.

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### TO THE SKYLARK.

Written at Rydal Mount in 1825 ; published in 1827.

Twenty years before this poem was written, Wordsworth addressed another poem very dissimilar to this, to the skylark. In the earlier poem, the poet catches the infection of joy in the lark's song, and his own strain endeavors to rival it in ecstasy. It is a poem of youth and youth's hopefulness and joy. In the later poem, Wordsworth, leaving the quality of the lark's song, characteristically leans his ear for "the still, sad music of humanity." The usual source of inspiration to song is the return of leafy spring. But the lark is privileged beyond others of its kind. Singing so far above the earth, it finds its motive in its surroundings, "a privacy of glorious light," and in its nest beneath "upon the dewy ground." As such, it becomes the type of the truly wise in this world, who seek their highest happiness in the simple primary affections and duties of life.

Dowden says: "The idea of this poem may be found in *The Prelude*, Book xiv, ll. 382-387 :

And hence, this song which like a lark  
 I have protracted, in the unwearied heavens  
 Singing, and often with more plaintive voice  
 To earth attempered and her deep drawn sighs,  
 Yet cent'ring all in love."

The skylark is an exclusively European bird. Our Canadian horned-lark, so common about the roadsides and fences in the spring, occasionally sings from a point high in the air above its nest, but its song is neither musical nor of long duration. Of the English skylark, John Burroughs writes as follows :-

"The bird that occupies the second place to the nightingale, in British poetical literature, is the skylark, a pastoral bird as the Philomel is arboreal—a creature of light, and air, and motion, the companion of

the ploughman, the shepherd, the harvester — whose nest is in the stubble, and whose tryst is in the clouds. Its life affords that kind of contrast which the imagination loves—one moment a plain pedestrian bird, hardly distinguishable from the ground; the next, a soaring, untiring songster, revelling in the upper air, challenging the eye to follow him, and the ear to separate his notes.

“The lark’s song is not especially melodious, but lithesome, sibilant and unceasing. Its type is the grass, where the bird makes its home, abounding, multitudinous, the notes nearly all alike, and all in the same key, but rapid, swarming, prodigal, showering down as thick and fast as drops of rain in a summer shower.” *Birds and Poets*.

1. **Ethereal minstrel.** Compare Shelley’s description of the lark’s song, ll. 3-5.

**pilgrim of the sky.** “Lone traveller into the sky.” Webb.

2. Cf. Shelley, *To a Skylark*, st. 20 :

Thou scorner of the ground.

**where cares abound.** The ignobility and anxiety of life being productive in certain minds of cynicism and indifference.

3-4. Cf. Hogg, *The Skylark*, l. 12 :

Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

6. **composed.** Folded. An absolute construction.

7. Cf. Tennyson, *The Skylark*, ll. 1-8 :

How the blithe lark runs up the golden stair  
That leans thro’ cloudy gates from heaven to earth,  
And all alone in the empyreal air,  
Fills it with jubilant, sweet songs of mirth ;

How far he seems, how far  
With the light upon his wings ;  
Is it a bird, or star  
That shines, and sings ?

Or the lines from John Lyly :

Who is’t now we hear ?  
None but the lark so shrill and clear ;  
Now at heaven’s gate she claps her wings,  
The morn not waking till she sings.

13. **the nightingale.** Cf. Keats’ *Ode to the Nightingale* and Milton’s *Il Penseroso*.

14. **Privacy of glorious light.** A very effective paradox. Cf. Shelley, *To a Skylark* :

Like a poet hidden  
In the light of thought.

16. The instinct of the skylark is "more divine" than that of the nightingale, in that besides being true to its nest it soars heavenward.

17-18. "The wise, while they do not neglect the lowlier duties of every day life, cultivate at the same time higher and holier interests. They harmoniously combine the two inter-related aims. A comparison is implied between this steadfastness of the wise and the constancy with which the magnetic needle points to the north and south poles." Webb.

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### THE GREEN LINNET.

Written in 1803 ; published in 1807.

In making the green linnet the subject of poetic treatment, Wordsworth is inspired to some extent, no doubt, by the beauty of the bird and by his love for it, and describes merely for the sake of the description. But as usual he looks also beyond mere externals and sees in the linnet one characteristic which makes it the symbol of the life of nature itself, viz., its capability for joy or enjoyment. In the expression of joy the linnet is pre-eminent: for while other forms of life are mutually dependent upon each other for their happiness the linnet "too blest with any one to pair" is itself its own enjoyment. It is to be noted that the enjoyment of the linnet finds expression not only in its song (stanza 5) but also in movement (stanza 3). It has the double "joy of voice and pinion."

The green linnet corresponds to the purple-finch of America, but is a much more abundant and conspicuous bird than its Canadian congener. Mr. Wintringham writes in "The Birds of Wordsworth," p. 123: "of all English birds, the greenfinch, or the green-grosbeak, is best adapted to its position in nature. Its color makes it almost imperceptible to all who are not adepts in ornithology. The bright gamboge yellow of its primary feathers and the bright golden-green of the least wing-coverts do not foil the hiding powers of its other plumage, but rather complete than destroy the bird's perfect adaptation."

6. **orchard-seat.** "This of all Wordsworth's poems is the one most distinctively associated with the orchard at Town-end, Grasmere," Knight.

“The ‘orchard-seat’ was upon the terrace at the rear of the garden and was reached by stone steps cut by the poet himself; at the present time an arbor stands there.” George.

Cf. *A Farewell*, ll. 1-6.

Farewell thou little nook of mountain-ground,  
Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair  
Of that magnificent temple which doth bound  
One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare;  
Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,  
The loveliest spot that man hath ever found.

10. **covert.** A place of shelter.

15. **the revels of the May.** May-day celebration. Cf. Tennyson, *The May Queen*, or Herrick, *Corinna's Maying*.

18. **paramours.** Usually used in a bad sense. In Wordsworth it simply means *lovers*. Cf. *Hart Leap Well*:

And in the summer-time when days are long,  
I will come hither with my paramour;  
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song  
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

20. **Sole.** Single.

16-24. Cf. the lines on the green linnet in *The Kitten and Falling Leaves*:

Where is he, that giddy sprite,  
Blue-cap, with his colors bright,  
Who was blest as bird could be,  
Feeding in the apple-tree;  
Made such wanton spoil and rout  
Turning blossoms inside out;  
Hung—head pointing toward the ground—  
Fluttered, perched, into a round  
Bound himself and then unbound;  
Lithest, gaudiest harlequin!  
Prettiest tumbler ever seen!  
Light of heart and light of limb,  
What is now become of him?

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## TO THE CUCKOO.

Written in the spring of 1802, in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere; published in 1807.

*To the Cuckoo* is not merely an expression of the poet's delight in the pleasing “shout” of the cuckoo itself. Indeed it is one of the most

prominent characteristics of Wordsworth that he should look beyond the mere beauty of the bird's song, to enquire into its deeper relation to his own life. As he listens in rapture to this "wandering voice" of returning spring, it becomes for him in the first place a symbol of the mysterious in life and of the "unsubstantial" spiritual joy, the highest joy of living. This joy is intimately connected in the poet's maturer mind with childhood's associations, and it is as an agent in recalling the happiness and delight of "that golden time" that the cry of the cuckoo appeals especially to his imagination.

The cuckoo seems to have been Wordsworth's favorite bird—what the skylark was to Shelley and the Nightingale to Keats. Four separate poems, the present one, the *Sonnet to the Cuckoo*, *The Cuckoo at Laverna*, and *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* (adapted from Chancer), besides numerous references in other poems, testify to his affection for it.

The European cuckoo is much more attractive, both in song and plumage, than its American fellow. But the cuckoo of our forests is an improvement on the Old World species in one respect at least, that it builds a nest and does not impose its young upon other birds. Of the American cuckoo, John Burroughs writes in *Wake Robin*: "The cuckoo is one of the most solitary birds of our forests, and is strangely tame and quiet, appearing equally untouched by joy or grief, fear or anger. Something remote seems ever weighing upon his mind. His note or call is as of one lost or wandering, and to the farmer is prophetic of rain."

1. have heard. In past years.

3. Cf. Shelley, *To a Skylark*, ll. 1-2.

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!  
Bird thou never wert.

"His (Wordsworth's) placid life matured a quite unusual sensibility, really innate in him, to the sights and sounds of the natural world—the flower and its shadow on the stone, the cuckoo and its echo. . . . Clear and delicate, at once, as he is in the outlining of visible imagery, he is more clear and delicate still, and finely scrupulous in the noting of sounds; so that he conceives of noble sound as even moulding the human countenance to nobler types, and as something actually 'pro-faned' by color, by visible form or image. Walter Pater, *Appreciations*.

4. wandering Voice. Cf. the sonnet *To the Cuckoo*:

But long as cock shall crow from household perch  
To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed thy wing  
And thy *erratic voice* be faithful to the spring!



And also *The Cuckoo at Laverna* :

A gratulation from that *vagrant voice*  
Was wanting.

6. **twofold shout.** Referring to the two notes of the cuckoo's cry.  
Cf. sonnet, *To the Cuckoo* :

Like the first summons, Cuckoo! of thy bill  
With its *twin notes* inseparably paired.

Also, *The Sun Has Long Been Set*, ll. 8-9 :

And the Cuckoo's sovereign cry  
Fills all the hollow of the sky.

9-10. The bird has no knowledge of the effect which he produces upon his hearer. He sings only about sunshine and flowers. Is "babbling" an appropriate word?

12. **visionary hours.** The period of boyhood, when the mind was full of dreams and visions.

Cf. *When to the Attractions of the Busy World* :

Grasmere's peaceful lake,  
And one green island, gleam between the stems  
Of the dark firs, a *visionary scene* !

Also, *Scorn not the Sonnet* :

The sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned  
His *visionary* brow.

13. **darling of the Spring.** Cf. *The Solitary Reaper*, ll. 13-16 :

A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,  
Breaking the silence of the seas  
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Cf. also *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* :

And as I lay, the cuckoo, bird unholy,  
Broke silence.

14. **Even yet.** Now that the *visionary hours* of my boyhood have passed away.

19. **a thousand ways.** As a result of the peculiar introverted, ventriloquial character of the bird's notes.

24. The cuckoo is of an unsocial nature, and keeps out of sight. On account of its habit of leaving the rearing of its young to other birds, its appearance causes all the small birds to set in pursuit of it.

25-8. Webb quotes *Intimations of Immortality*, ll. 161-164 :

Hence in a season of calm weather,  
Though inland far we be,  
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither.

Cf. also *The Fountain*, ll. 29-32 :

My eyes are dim with childish tears,  
My heart is idly stirred,  
For this same sound is in my ears  
Which in those days I heard.

30-1. Stopford Brooke, in "Theology in the English Poets," says :

"There are times when the sense of this spiritual life in nature becomes so dominant that the material world fades away and we feel as if we ourselves were pure spirit, and all the objects of sense were not real things we could touch, but unsubstantial appearances. . . . It is an experience many of us have gone through. It comes chiefly when the incessant small noises of nature make less attack upon the ear, when we are high up on a mountain side, or when we sit at night by the sea when the low mist seems to hush the water into silence, or when in deep noon one sound alone, like the wandering voice of the cuckoo, smites on the ear. One knows how Wordsworth felt this last—how the invisible bird became to him only a voice, a mystery ; till the whole world was taken out of the region of sense and made as visionary as this herald of the spring. It is an experience which often came to this poet as boy and man."

Cf. *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* :

Not for these I raise  
The song of thanks and praise ;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Falling from us, vanishings ;  
Blank misgivings of a creature  
Moving about in worlds not realized.

31. **Faery.** "A variant of the more usual word *fairy* ; the form *faery* is connected with Spenser's great poem, and is here specially appropriate as suggesting his meaning of the word pertaining to the region of the ideal and of imagination ; whereas *fairy* is rather suggestive of the more trivial ideas connected with the fanciful beings of childish story." Alexander.

In the majority of editions in which this poem appears, line 31 is followed by a colon or semi-colon, instead of a comma.

## TO THE DAISY.

Composed in 1802 ; published in 1807.

In the arrangement of his poems for publication in collected form, Wordsworth classified them under various headings—Poems of the Fancy, Poems of the Imagination, Poems Founded on the Affections, etc. *To the Daisy* was placed in the division entitled Poems of the Fancy.

“Fancy,” he explains in the edition of 1815, “depends upon the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images, trusting that their number and the felicity with which they are linked together will make amends for the wants of individual value ; or she prides herself upon the curious subtlety and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities.” *To the Daisy* is little more than an “elaboration” of the “lurking affinities” of the flower to other objects of “all degrees,” and as such requires little comment. The first stanza gives us an insight into the spirit in which these similes are conceived—the spirit of love, and in the concluding stanza the poet cannot refrain from once again expressing his own personal relations and obligations to the daisy.

Of stanzas 3, 5, 6, Ruskin writes in *Modern Painters*, iii, as follows : “Observe how spiritual, yet how wandering and playful, the fancy is in the first two stanzas, and how far she flies from the matter in hand, never stopping to brood on the character of any one of the images she summons, and yet for a moment truly seeing and believing in them all ; while in the last stanza the imagination returns with its deep feeling to the heart of the flower, and *cleaves fast* to that.”

“It is curiously characteristic that Wordsworth, who taught his philosophy by examples taken from the field, Michael, Margaret and their like, should have exercised his fancy upon the blossoms of the hedge-row. In contrast to Tennyson, whose idylls were of the king, and whose honey was won from the roses, Wordsworth went to humble life for his people and his flowers alike. He made beautiful the ‘unassuming commonplace of nature,’ and recurred again and again to the daisy, the primrose, the violet, and the common pilewort as parallel types to his heroes of the plough.” Magnus.

Of the English daisy John Burroughs writes in *Fresh Fields* : “It is a flower almost as common as the grass ; find a square foot of green sward anywhere and you are pretty sure to find a daisy, probably several of them. Bairnwort—child’s-flower it is called in some parts,—

and its expression is truly infantile. . . . Some flowers please us by their intrinsic beauty of color and form ; others by their expression of certain human qualities ; the daisy has a modest, lowly, unobtrusive way that is very taking. A little white ring, its margin unevenly touched with crimson, it looks up at one like the eye of a child. . . . The daisy is prettier in the bud than in the flower as it then shows more crimson. It shuts up on the approach of foul weather ; hence Tennyson says the daisy closes

Her crimson fringes to the showers.

1. **here.** In the seclusion of his home in Grasmere.

9. **dappled.** Variegated, spotted with daisies.

11. **through all degrees.** Of high and low degree : for example, the daisy is compared to a queen at one moment and to a starveling the next.

25. **Cyclops.** The Greek word for round-eyed. In Greek myth the cyclopes were giants having a single round eye in the middle of the forehead.

30. **boss.** The circular protuberance in the centre of the shield, corresponding to the yellow centre of the flower.

46-8. Cf. stanzas 7 and 8 of the first poem, *To the Daisy* : "In youth from rock to rock "

If stately passions in me burn,  
And one chance look to Thee should turn,  
*I drink out of a humbler urn*  
*A lowlier pleasure ;*  
The homely sympathy that heeds  
The common life our nature breeds ;  
A wisdom fitted to the needs  
Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh smitten by the morning ray,  
When thou art up, alert and gay,  
*Then cheerful Flower ! my spirits play*  
*With kindred gladness ;*  
And when, at dusk, by dews oppress  
Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest  
Hath often eased my pensive breast  
Of careful sadness.

## TO A DISTANT FRIEND.

Composed in 1835 ; published the same year.

The Fenwick note gives us Wordsworth's own account of its composition. "In the month of January, when Dora and I were walking from Town-end, Grasmere, across the vale, snow being on the ground, she espied, in a thick though leafless hedge, a bird's nest, half-filled with snow. Out of this comfortless appearance arose this sonnet, which was, in fact, written without the least reference to any individual object ; but merely to prove to myself that I could, if I thought fit, write in a strain that poets have been fond of. On the 14th of February, in the same year, my daughter in a sportive mood sent it as a Valentine under a fictitious name, to her cousin C. W."

4. Can it be that there is nothing concerning which you feel in duty bound to write—the fulfilment of some obligation towards me or the granting of some favor or request ?

*boon*—originally meant a *petition*, but now a *favor* or a *gift*.

5. Emphasize *my* and *thee*.

7-8. An absolute construction. Even in my most selfish ('least generous') moments I have been content to ask nothing of you that would in any way interfere with your happiness.

*mendicant*. A beggar ; properly an adjective, as in '*the mendicant friars*.'

11-12. Cf. *Evangeline*, ll. 1198-99.

But on *Evangeline's* heart fell his words as in winter the snow-flakes  
Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.

13. *eglantine*. Sweet-briar.

## THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND.

[ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND.]

Composed in 1807 ; published the same year.

"This was composed while pacing to and fro between the Hall of Coleorton, then rebuilding, and the principal farm-house of the estate, in which we lived for nine or ten months." Wordsworth's note.

"The invasion of Switzerland by France in 1797 completely alienated Coleridge's sympathies from the French, and he expressed his feelings



in his great poem, *France: An Ode*. But Wordsworth's sonnet probably has special reference to Bonaparte's "Act of Mediation," 1803, by which the Swiss Confederation was reinstated. While it was an improvement in many respects on the Helvetic Republic, the new arrangement, guaranteed by Bonaparte, made French influence predominant in Switzerland." Dowden.

In 1807, the date of the composition of this sonnet, Napoleon was making preparations for the invasion of England.

2. **One of the Mountains.** The music of mountain streams. Cf. ll. 8 and 13.

3. Mountainous countries and islands, being difficult of invasion, have at all times manifested a strong spirit of freedom.

Cf. Milton, *L'Allegro*, ll. 35-36 :

And in thy right hand lead with thee  
The mountain nymph, Sweet Liberty ;

And Tennyson, *To the Queen*, ll. 33-36 :

By shaping some august decree,  
Which kept her throne unshaken still,  
Broad-based upon her people's will,  
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.

5. **a tyrant.** Napoleon Bonaparte.

**holy glee.** Rejoicing in the righteousness of your cause.

9-10. **one deep bliss.** The music of Alpine torrents.

**that which still is left.** The sound of the ocean breaking upon British shores.

### MILTON THOU SHOULDST BE LIVING AT THIS HOUR.

Written in 1802 ; published in 1807.

Upon the circumstances which called forth the Sonnet, Webb comments as follows : "The state of England in 1802 was one that might well fill a nature like Wordsworth's with dismay. The wealth of the country had greatly increased, but so had the population ; the rate of wages was thus kept down, and the rise in the price of wheat, owing to the war, while it enriched the landowner and the farmer, terribly impoverished the laboring classes. The amount of the poor rate was doubled and with the increase of poverty came the increase of crime. 'It is indeed from these fatal years that we must date that war

of classes, that social severance between employers and employed, which still forms the main difficulty of English politics' (Green's History of the English People). In politics it was an age of coalitions and time serving expedients ; there was little or no progressive movement, rather a reaction."

1. **Milton.** John Milton (1608-1674) passed the first thirty-two years of his life in academic study in London and Cambridge and in retirement at his father's residence in Horton, Buckinghamshire. During this period of youthful study, he composed the greater number of his shorter poems and already contemplated the great epic of his later life. In 1641 he was recalled from a tour on the continent by the outbreak of hostilities between Parliament and King. Espousing the cause of Parliament, he became the ardent apostle and champion of freedom, political, social and religious. Under the commonwealth he became secretary of the Council of State and conducted all correspondence with Foreign Courts. Upon the Restoration in 1660 he withdrew into retirement to prosecute the work of his great epic, which he completed in 1665. As a result of over-study, blindness had overtaken him in 1652. He died in 1674 at the age of sixty-eight.

2-3. **a fen of stagnant waters.** "Men's hearts seem dull and dead to noble aims and efforts." Webb.

3-6. **Altar . . . happiness.** In all departments of life, religious, military, literary, domestic and social, lower ideals, false ideas of happiness as based on outward circumstance and show, have led us to sacrifice true happiness and peace of mind, the outcome of 'plain living and high thinking,' which our forefathers so dearly prized.

4. **the heroic . . . bower.** In olden times the *hall* was the principal room of the castle ; the *bower* was the inner apartment set apart for the ladies. In the present connection *hall and bower* stands for the better class of English society, the middle and upper classes, whose steady courage in the struggles of the past has given birth to such a wealth of heroic deed.

5. **dower.** A gift ; an endowment (from Lat. *dotare*, to endow ; *dos*, a gift). The conditions which make possible such 'inward happiness' are the gift or 'dower' which our ancestors have won and handed down to us.

6. **inward happiness.** Cf. the sonnet *Near Dover*, ll. 13-14.

by the *soul*  
Only, the nations shall be great and free.

7-8. It is to the 'faith and morals' of Milton that Wordsworth looks for the regeneration of the age.

What know we greater than the soul,  
On God and Godlike men we build our trust

Tennyson.

"Leaving out of view the pretensions of our contemporaries (always an incalculable influence) we think no men can be named whose mind still acts on the cultivated intellect of England and America with an energy comparable to that of Milton. . . . Shakespeare is a voice merely; who and what he was that sung—that sings, we know not. Milton stands erect, commanding, still visible as a man among men, and reads the laws of the moral sentiment to the new-born race." Emerson.

8. *manners*. Like the Latin *mores*, refers rather to principles of conduct than to the observance of the laws of etiquette.

Cf. *To the Rev. Dr. Wordsworth* :

Hail ancient manners, sure defence,  
Where they exist, of wholesome laws.

9. "He (Wordsworth) is the most solitary of poets. Of him, with far more point than of Milton, may it be said,

His soul was like a star and dwelt apart."

Hutton.

10. Cf. Tennyson's sonnet on Milton, ll. 1-4 :

O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,  
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,  
God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
Milton, a name to resound for ages.

12. *so*. Sums up the characteristics mentioned in l. 11.

13. *yet*. What is the point of the contrast implied in this conjunction.

14. "Upon his return to England in 1639, Milton occupied himself for seven years in teaching private pupils, showing them an example of 'hard study and spare diet.'" Webb.

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#### WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

Composed July 31, 1802; published in 1807.

"Written," says Wordsworth, "on the roof of a coach on my way to France." Dorothy Wordsworth has the following entry in her journal of 1802: "We left London on Saturday morning at half-past five or

six. We mounted the Dover coach at Charing Cross. It was a beautiful morning. The city, St. Paul's, with the river, and a multitude of little boats, made a most beautiful sight as we crossed Westminster Bridge. The houses were not overhung by their cloud of smoke, and they were spread out endlessly ; yet the sun shone so brightly, with such a fierce light, that there was something like the purity of one of nature's own grand spectacles."

Webb quotes a passage from a letter by Mr. R. S. Watson, in illustration of the sonnet. "Many years ago I chanced to be passing over Waterloo Bridge at half-past three on a lovely June morning. It was broad daylight, and I was alone. Never when alone in the remotest recesses of the Alps, with nothing around me but the mountains, or upon the plains of Africa, alone with the wonderful glory of the southern night, have I seen anything to approach the solemnity—the soothing solemnity of the city, sleeping under the early sun :

Earth has not anything to show more fair."

"*Westminster Bridge* (the sonnet) is justly famed for its beauty, and is interesting, too, from another point of view. Wordsworth's attitude towards London was never very deeply inspired. His residence there before the Revolution produced little more than a 'country cousin's' sensations. After his return from Paris, at the end of 1792, he was more or less a stranger in the city, and its attraction to him was in its position as the centre of political affairs rather than in any romance of its own. *The Reverie of Poor Susan*, in whose vision

Bright volumes of vapor through Lothbury glide,  
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside,

is the most inspired utterance provoked. It is characteristic, therefore, that the present fine sonnet should be of London at rest, not in its ceaseless motion." Magnus.

Westminster Bridge crosses the Thames at the east end of the Houses of Parliament, connecting the district of Westminster with that of Lambeth.

4. like a garment. Cf. *Psalm* civ, 2: "Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment."

5. bare. distinct ; not involved in mist or smoke.

6. In the immediate neighborhood of Westminster Bridge are many imposing structures, of which the Houses of Parliament, with their two prominent towers, Westminster Abbey and Whitehall, are the chief.

The theatres are mostly situated in the neighborhood of the Strand, but at the present day there is a large theatre close to the south-west entrance to the bridge.

**temples.** Applied to the more imposing edifices used for religious purposes, such as Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral.

7. "London, as he sees its outspread panorama in its early morning brightness and purity, seems to him at one with the silent beauty of the nature he loves. In its mid-day smoke and noise, London is cut off from all community with the green fields around and the blue sky above." Webb.

10. **his first splendor.** Cf. *The Lady of the Lake*, canto v, 1:

Fair as the earliest beam of eastern light,  
When, first by the bewildered pilgrim spied,  
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night;  
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,  
And lights the fearful path on mountain side.

12. **at his own sweet will.** Its natural serenity undisturbed by busy commerce.

13. **Dear God!** The exclamation marks the culmination of the poet's feeling.

14. **that mighty heart.** The source of life, activity and emotion.

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### THE INNER VISION.

One of the poems composed or suggested during a tour in the summer of 1833; published in 1835. Dowden.

"This sonnet reveals to us the method of the poet's work, and if rightly understood will show us the ground of his criticism upon Scott's method, which he considered as too conscious, approaching nature with a pencil and note-book, and jotting down an inventory of her charms. In every scene" says Wordsworth, "many of the most brilliant details are but accidental; a true eye for nature does not note them, or at least does not dwell on them." George.

2. It is characteristic of Wordsworth that he composed more easily while walking upon smooth and level ground. His friend Coleridge did his best work under the opposite conditions.

5. Compare the similar idea expressed in Keats' *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, stanza 2.



Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
 Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
 Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,  
 Pipe to the spirit, ditties of no tone.

6. **tone.** Literally *tone* refers to the character of sound; here to the character of the meditation. Its association with music and painting has given it an increased poetic value.

8. The beauty which he will enjoy upon lifting the eyes again to view the 'fair region,' and the beauty which he has already looked upon and enjoyed.

9-14. "The octave is introductory, and states a feeling which the poet experiences; this feeling is an illustration of a broad truth which underlies Wordsworth's poetic work. In the sestet the poet proceeds to give expression to this truth, and his sense of its importance,—the external world furnishes merely the basis for poetry; the most valuable part of a poem is that which is added by the reflective powers or by the feelings of the artist himself, and such reflection or feeling may elevate the humblest external fact which we observe by our senses." Alexander.

9. **If Thought, and Love desert us.** "If working in isolation, the intellect does nothing of moral worth." Aubrey De Vere.

**Thought.** That is, the intellect working through meditation and reflection, enables us to discover the spiritual significance of facts, objects and phenomena. *Love*, that is, a warmth of feeling towards all the objects of our contemplation, directs and controls the character of our meditation, tempers the judgments of the intellect, and perfects the poet's delineation of the external world by adding the emotional element to the intellectual interpretation of its significance.

10. **commerce.** Communion, intercourse.

12. The spiritual significance is of more importance than details of sound, color, smell, etc., which may or may not be noticed by the poet.

13-14. Expand the metaphor. "What made Wordsworth's poems a medicine for my state of mind was, that *they expressed not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling, and thought colored by feeling under the excitement of beauty.* I needed to be made to feel that there was real permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation. Wordsworth taught me this, not only without turning away from, but with greatly increased interest in, the common feelings and common destiny of human beings." John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*.

## WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

This sonnet was first published in 1807.

“This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not but be struck, as here described, with the vanity and parade of our own country, especially in great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and the succeeding sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth.” Wordsworth’s note.

1. “The ‘Friend’ of l. 1 was Coleridge.” Dowden.

4-5. **mean handiwork of craftsman, cook, or groom.** We care only for outward display—ornament and dress, feasts and banquets and fashionable equipage.

5-6. Society will frown upon us unless our lives are marked by such outward display.

8-9. **No grandeur . . . us.** Cf. Wordsworth’s *When I Have Borne in Memory*, ll. 2-4 :

ennobling thoughts depart  
When men change swords for ledgers and desert  
The student’s bower for gold.

9-10. **Rapine . . . adore.** So great a value do we place upon worldly riches that we no longer shrink from dishonest methods of obtaining money, greed of gain and extravagance in expenditure.

Cf. Coleridge, *Fears in Solitude* :

We have drunk up, demure as at a grace,  
Pollutions from the brimming cup of wealth ;  
Contemptuous of all honorable rule,  
Yet bartering freedom and the poor man’s life  
For gold, as at a market !

12. **the good old cause.** Former conditions of life and character.

Cf. Burke. “The ancient and inbred integrity, piety, good nature and good humor of the English people.”

13. **our fearful innocence.** Apprehensive at the approach of evil. *Fearful* is here used in its root sense, *full of fear*, rather than its ordinary sense, *inspiring fear*.

Cf. the lines from Charles Wesley’s hymn :

Ah ! give me, Lord, the tender heart  
That trembles at the approach of sin ;  
A godly fear of sin impart,  
Implant and root it deep within.

14. **breathing household laws.** The 'pure religion' of the household is reflected in the conduct of its members. The morals of the state depend in turn upon the purity of family life.

## TO SLEEP.

Written in 1806 ; published in 1807.

This sonnet is one of three on the same subject, written by Wordsworth.

Sleep has always been a favorite theme with the poets, and many notable passages might be quoted in illustration. The most famous of all is no doubt the familiar descriptive passage in *Macbeth* :

Methought I heard a voice cry " Sleep no more !  
Macbeth does murmur sleep"—the innocent sleep,  
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,  
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,  
Chief nourisher in life's feast.

1-5. The monotonous nature of the sounds and images which the mind dwells upon, acts as a sedative and induces sleep.

6-7. Cf. Tennyson, *The Princess*, vii :

Till notice of a change in the dark world  
Was lispt about the Acacias, and a bird,  
That early woke to feed her little ones,  
Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light.

8. **melancholy cry.** " So to the sleepless man sounds the note of the once 'blithe new-comer.'" Webb.

10. Cf. *Henry IV.*, Part Second, iii, 1 :

Sleep, gentle sleep,  
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,  
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,  
And steep my senses in forgetfulness ?

11. **So.** That is, *sleepless*.

13-14. Cf. Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, lxxi, for the opposite characterization :

Sleep, kinsman thou to death and trance  
And madness.

## WITHIN KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

"In December, 1820, Wordsworth visited Cambridge, and certainly wrote one sonnet on that occasion; perhaps the three suggested by King's College Chapel belong to that date; they were published among the ecclesiastical sonnets in 1822." Dowden.

1. **the royal Saint.** King's College was founded in 1446 by King Henry VI., who laid the corner-stone in that year. The Chapel was left unfinished at his death, but the work was continued by Henry VII., and completed by Henry VIII.

2. **ill-match'd aims.** In planning 'this immense and glorious work' for 'a band of white-robed scholars only.'

**the Architect.** "The designer of the structure is unknown; it is conjectured from the personal supervision and alterations made by him, at Eton, that Henry himself was the architect." George.

3. **A scanty band.** Numbering in all only seventy.

5. *Deuteronomy* xvi, 17: "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee."

6-7. **the lore . . . more.** The careful calculation of the exact amount that will suffice.

8. **for the sense.** To give pleasure to the eye.

9. **These lofty pillars.** "King's College Chapel is a pre-eminent example of the Perpendicular or Florid style of architecture. Floor alone excepted, the whole is one mass of panelling. The roof is composed entirely of arches of the most airy construction, covered with exquisite fan-like tracery. Decoration runs riot everywhere, and the sense aches again at the beauty, and splendor, and variety that everywhere meet the gaze." Webb.

10. **Self-poised.** "The lofty pillars form part of the walls, and the arched roof is thrown from wall to wall, unsupported by any intermediate columns." *Ibid.*

11-12. **where music . . . die.** Cf. the succeeding sonnet on the same chapel, ll. 11-14:

But from the arms of silence, list! O list!  
The music bursteth into second life;  
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed  
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife;  
Heart-thrilling strains that cast before the eye  
Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy!







*Samuel T. Coleridge.*

# NOTES ON COLERIDGE.

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## BIOGRAPHY.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in the Vicarage of Ottery, St. Mary, Devonshire, Oct. 21, 1772—the youngest of a family of ten children. His father, Rev. John Coleridge, head master of the Free Grammar School and vicar of the parish, was, it appears, a simple and eccentric, though, withal, scholarly clergyman—‘a man of more mark than most rural incumbents.’ His mother seems to have been a woman of little education or imagination, though of pronounced prejudices, and strongly ambitious for the welfare of her family. It is noticeable that it is to his father that the poet in after life looks back with a sense of indebtedness for early training and inspiration. In his early boyhood he proved markedly precocious, and at an early age showed a fondness for solitude and meditation, rather than for the ordinary sports of childhood. The death of his father, however, in 1781, interfered with the orderly course of his education, and a year later the future poet-philosopher was entered as a pupil in the great Charity School of Christ’s Hospital, London.

The nine years which he spent in Christ’s Hospital, though not on the whole a happy period in his life, were not without important influence on his later career. From this period of school life date, among other things, the beginning of a life-long friendship with his fellow-pupil and fellow-sufferer, Charles Lamb, and more important still, his adoption of the principles of the new movement already making itself felt in the literary world. For if the headmaster of the school, the Rev. James Bowyer, was too ardent a believer in the use of the rod, he had this redeeming feature, that he inspired the mind of one of his pupils, at least, with a strong sense of the necessity of new aims and ideals in the world of letters at large.

In February, 1791, he entered Jesus College, Cambridge, just one month after Wordsworth had left the University. He proved, on the whole, an indifferent student, but on the other hand his sympathies went out largely towards the Revolutionary movement in France, and about the same period also he adopted as his religious creed the prin-

ciples of the Unitarian Church. His unpractical character soon involved him in debt, and in the period of despondency that followed, he secretly left college, reached London, and after a few days of aimless wandering, enlisted in the dragoons under the assumed name of Silas Comberbach. Relieved finally by his friends from the irksomeness of this self-imposed tie, he returned to Cambridge, but did not complete his course.

On a visit to Oxford in 1791, he met there Robert Southey, an under-graduate of congenial tastes, though, as the sequel proved, of widely different character and habits of life. One of the first results of this new friendship was a chimerical plan of the two friends, both of whom were dissatisfied with the conditions of existing society, to found an ideal community in America, on the banks of the Susquehanna. Other enthusiastic friends, to the number of twenty-six, were soon persuaded to join the enterprise, and as a preliminary to the undertaking, Coleridge and Southey were both married, the former to Miss Sara Fricker, of Bristol, the latter to a younger sister. Then it was that the impossibility of the project confronted them most forcibly. None of the parties engaged in the enterprise had any money to prosecute the scheme. Pantisocracy, as the visionary project had originally been named, was from that time forward, dead.

Henceforward for a number of years, the life of Coleridge consisted in a series of attempts to solve the problem of how to make money. *The Watchman*, a weekly journal which he inaugurated in March, 1796, was discontinued after three months. His first volume of poems, published in the same year, failed to produce any impression. In his various roles of lecturer, tutor, Unitarian preacher, and journalist, he was equally unsuccessful, from a financial point of view at least. He at first took up house at Clevedon, a small village near Bristol, but in 1796 removed to Nether Stowey, Somersetshire, in the neighborhood of the Quantock Hills. Here, in 1797, he was joined by Wordsworth, whose friendship he had already formed in the previous year. This year of companionship with Wordsworth (1797-98) has been called the *Annus Mirabilis* of Coleridge's poetic career—the year of the *Ode to France*, the first part of *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan*, *Fears in Solitude*, and *The Ancient Mariner*. The last named poem was Coleridge's most important contribution to the *Lyrical Ballads*, published in 1798. In this same year, 1798, Coleridge received an unexpected bequest in the form of a settlement of £150 per annum, for life, from the two Wedgewood brothers, the famous potters. This settlement, small though it was, was sufficient to place the family of Coleridge beyond the possibility of immediate want

and Coleridge took advantage of the unexpected relief to accompany Wordsworth and his sister to Germany. Having mastered the language during a five months' sojourn at Ratzeburg, he proceeded to Göttingen, where he plunged at once into the study of metaphysics. He returned to England in the summer of 1799, but henceforward the poetic impulse was weak; the inclination to metaphysics had finally taken its place. Aside from the translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein* in 1800, the immediate outcome of his winter in Germany, and the addition of the second part of *Christabel* in the same year, his three remaining poems of note, viz., *Dejection*, 1802; *To William Wordsworth*, 1807, and *Youth and Age*, 1834, are in themselves merely the poet's threefold lament for lost opportunities and declining powers.

After a year of successful journalistic work in London, he settled in 1800, with his family, at Greta Hall, near Keswick, in the Lake District, some twelve miles from Grasmere, the home of Wordsworth. Here he seems to have passed two fairly happy and contented years. But with the year 1803 came a change. Undue exposure during a pedestrian tour in Scotland in company with the Wordsworths, brought on a severe attack of rheumatism, to which he was subject. To relieve the pains, he had recourse to the Kendal Black Drop, which contained a preparation of opium, and henceforward the drug, enfeebling mind and body alike, became the very bane and curse of his existence. In 1804 he set out for Malta in search of health; but in vain. At the end of a year, he gave up the position of public secretary, which he had accepted, and returned to England, delaying, however, unduly in Italy, on the way. In addition to other misfortunes, we note about this time also, an increase of domestic unhappiness, which finally led, some five years later, to Coleridge's permanent separation from his wife and family at Greta Hall.

The next ten years of his life, from 1805 to 1815, are years of unhappiness, disappointment, struggle and failure—homeless, aimless years. He turned his hand, at first, to journalistic hack-work, to lectures on the fine arts, and in 1809 to the inauguration of a new journal *The Friend*: one after the other these enterprises were abandoned or discontinued as unsuccessful. In 1811-1812, he delivered a series of brilliant lectures on Shakespeare and Milton, before the London Philosophical Society, and in 1813 his play of *Osorio*, written sixteen years before, was received with favor at Drury Lane. But success was again followed by failure, and the year 1814 found him once again broken in health and despondent in soul. "It was a relapse to the condition of the winter



1807-8, and it was due to the same cause—the drug, the drug, always the accursed drug.” The struggle, a hopeless one from the first, continued a year longer, and then, in the darkest hour, deliverance came. Early in 1816, Coleridge put himself under the care of Dr. Gillman, Highgate, and took up his residence under the doctor’s roof. Here he continued to reside for the remaining eighteen years of his life.

Removal to Highgate, however, did not entirely relieve him of the financial strain to which he had long been subjected, and he is forced from time to time to have recourse to lecturing and journalistic work as a means of independent subsistence. In respect to his literary career, these Highgate years are marked principally by the publication of work in poetry and prose, previously produced, rather than by any fresh literary efforts. *Christabel* was published in 1816, and was followed in 1817 by *Biographia Literaria*, an account of his own literary life and opinions, *Sibylline Leaves*, a collection of his poetical works, and *Zapolya*, a play. These publications for the most part met with a storm of hostile criticism. His philosophical work, *Aids to Reflection*, published in 1825, met, however, with a more favorable reception. In the same year he received a pension of £100 a year from the private purse of George IV., which continued until the king’s death in 1830. It is from these Highgate days, too, that the fame of Coleridge as a conversationalist principally dates. From the year 1820 onward, the tide of popularity began to turn slowly, very slowly indeed, in Coleridge’s favor, and from that date Highgate became a rallying point for many of the rising young men of literary pretensions and aspirations. Some ideas of his powers of conversation may be gathered from *Table Talk*, a record by H. N. Coleridge, his nephew and the husband of his daughter Sara, of the famous conversations of 1822 to 1834.

The closing years of Coleridge’s life were not entirely without happiness, and death when it came was not unexpected. ‘On the 25th of July, 1834, this sorely-tried, long-laboring, fate-marred, and self-marred life passed tranquilly away.’ “The grave had hardly closed on him when the world echoed with his praise. ‘Coleridge,’ said *Blackwood*, ‘alone perhaps of all men that ever lived was always a poet—in all his moods, and they were many, inspired.’”

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## THE ANCIENT MARINER.

*Publication.*—*The Ancient Mariner* occupies the first fifty-two pages of the first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, published in 1798. It reappeared in the subsequent editions of 1800, 1802, and 1805, with many alterations of text and the omission of many of the extreme archaisms. In 1817 it was published in the *Sibylline Leaves*, with two important additions, viz., the motto, from Burnet, and the marginal gloss, besides some further alterations.

*Origin and Sources.*—During the two years of Coleridge's residence at Nether Stowey, his conversation with Wordsworth "frequently turned on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination." In one of these conversations the thought suggested itself that a series of poems might be composed, in some of which the incidents and agents might be, in part at least, supernatural, in others, chosen from ordinary life. Wordsworth undertook "to excite a feeling analagous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom and directing it to the loveliness and wonders of the world before us," while Coleridge directed his efforts to transferring from our inward nature to persons and characters supernatural "a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith." Thus originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*, for which Coleridge wrote *The Ancient Mariner* and began *The Dark Ladie* and *Christabel*.

The immediate occasion of *The Ancient Mariner* is thus explained by Wordsworth: "Mr. Coleridge, my sister, and myself started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon with a view to visit Linton and the Valley of Stones near to it; and, as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expenses of the tour by writing a poem to be sent to the *New Monthly Magazine*. Accordingly, we set off and proceeded along the Quantock Hills to Watchet, and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of *The Ancient Mariner*, founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank (who fancied he saw coming into port a skeleton ship with spectre figures on board). Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention, but certain parts I suggested; for example, some crime was to be committed which would bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards

delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvøe's *Voyages*, a day or two before, that while doubling Cape Horn they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. 'Suppose,' said I, 'you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime.' The incident was thought fit for the purpose, and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time, at least not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous after-thought. We began the composition together on that to me memorable evening. I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular—

And listened like a three years' child  
The Mariner had his will.

These trifling contributions, all but one, which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded, slipped out of his mind, as well they might. As we endeavored to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening) our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. . . . *The Ancient Mariner* grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds."

Many other ideas were added to this first simple suggestion, and nothing better illustrates Coleridge's omnivorous reading and widely assimilative mind than his skilful weaving into one complete and rounded whole of so many suggestions from such a variety of sources. From the *Witches' Spell*, Act I, se. iii, *Macbeth*, he seems to have obtained a hint of the "night-mare Life-in-Death":

Sleep shall neither night nor day  
Hang upon his pent-house lid;  
He shall live a man forbid;  
Weary seven nights, nine times nine  
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.

Wordsworth suggested the plan of reanimating the dead men to work the ship. Similar and perhaps more definite suggestions came to him from a rude Danish ballad, *A Wonderful Ballad of Seafaring Men*, and

from the epistle of Bishop Paulinus of Nola to Macarius, wherein is mentioned the working of a vessel by a troop of angels. The conceptions of the "slimy sea," and of the "ice, mast-high," and of the "storm-blast, tyrannous and strong," were gathered—if we are to judge from marginal references in many note-books—from various sources,—from Captain James' *Strange Voyage into the South Sea*, Cook's *Voyages*, Hakluyt's *Voyages*, and such out-of-the-way reading as the visions of Burnet and Purchas's *Pilgrims*. The subsequent wanderings of the mariner, his mental restlessness, his irresistible desire to impart his experiences, were obviously suggested by the legend of the "Wandering Jew." Several details were suggested by Wordsworth, who also wrote a few lines, but the greater part of the poem is Coleridge's invention in that highest sense of originality which consists not in inventing but in using in a masterly way what is already available.

*The Teaching of the Poem.*—In a passage in *Table Talk*, Coleridge himself disclaims the idea that *The Ancient Mariner* was intended primarily to convey a moral. "Coleridge's intention was, it seems," says Mr. Herbert Bates, "merely to compose a thrilling poem of the supernatural, founded on his friend's strange dream of a ship full of dead men. The leading idea must have been the mystery of the ocean spaces where anything was possible; and the presence of those beings invisible, inhabitants of every element. And it is through these stronger motives that we hear, like a quiet flute in the turmoil of an orchestra, the tender teaching: 'He prayeth best who loveth best.'"

*The Marginal Gloss.*—The gloss not only adds to the quaintness and archaic character of the poem, but connects *The Ancient Mariner* with the philosophy of Coleridge; emphasizing therein the psychological interest, its curious soul-lore.

*The Setting.*—The story of the Wedding Guest, which forms a setting for the story proper of *The Ancient Mariner*, serves several distinct purposes in the poem. It serves, in the first place, to withdraw the attention of the reader from all such questions as to time, place, and fact, as would naturally present themselves in the beginning of such a narration, and makes it possible for the action to proceed directly and by strides into those regions of the unknown and mysterious, where alone such experiences would be considered possible. The impressions of the Wedding Guest, in the second place, serve as a medium by which we are enabled to see, far more effectively than was possible by any direct narration, the effect of the intense suffering, and the intensity of the spiritual conflict—"the woful agony" through which the soul of

the Mariner has already passed. In the third place, not only does it aid in securing the unity of the poem, but it also forms in itself a striking background for the story proper. In the struggle of the Wedding Guest we see before us once again the conflict of the worldly and the spiritual through which the Mariner has already passed, and, furthermore, in the mystery of the strange spiritual strength of the Mariner, we have presented to us an element of the mysterious, greater even than the weird occurrences of the story itself.

*The Supernatural.*—From Coleridge's own account of the purpose of *The Ancient Mariner*, we learn that the object of the introduction of the supernatural is to give pleasure to the reader, not by the mere presentation of the supernatural of itself, but rather by the delineation of the feelings and emotions to which it gave rise. Hence in *The Ancient Mariner*, the spiritual experiences of the mariner and his companions in crime are of much more importance than the accompanying framework of supernatural incident. But in order that we may truly enter into these feelings and emotions, it is necessary, as Coleridge is careful to add, that we suppose them real. And such an impression of reality the poet at once makes possible by the removal of the scene of action beyond the bounds of the known and familiar into the 'silent sea,' into which we are 'the first that ever burst.' "Thenceforth we cease to have any direct relations with the verifiable. Natural law has been suspended; standards of probability have ceased to exist. Marvel after marvel is accepted by us, as by the wedding guest, with the unquestioning faith of 'a three years' child!'"

*The Crime and its Retribution.*—The motive of the story of *The Ancient Mariner* is the crime which the mariner commits, and the interest of the narrative centres largely about the extent and method of retribution meted out to the participants in the crime. The mariner's offence consists, in the first place, in the killing of the albatross, a bird of good omen, not in self-defence or as a matter of necessity; but out of sheer malvolence and disregard for the sacredness of even the lowest forms of animal life. The punishment which follows consists not merely in the physical and mental torture to which the mariner is subjected; but in a lifelong expiation of his crime, a veritable life-in-death, an agony of soul which returns at a certain hour, so that his heart burns within him.

But does not the penance seem to be too severe for the crime? Is not the shooting of the albatross a comparatively trivial offence to be productive of such terrible results? The mariner is punished, not



merely for the shooting of the albatross, but for that underlying hardness of heart which made such a deed possible. His immediate sufferings are relieved only when his conditions of soul change, when he is, as it were, converted, and love for 'man, and bird, and beast,' becomes the ruling principle of his life. Henceforward, that part of his penance which imposes upon him the necessity of telling the story of his own crime and its punishment, becomes to him a duty, a natural and inevitable result of his change of heart. The 'agony' is, no doubt, the remembrance of, and keen remorse for, his past crime, which leads him to be solicitous about the hard-hearted and careless whom he meets with in his wanderings from time to time.

The sailors also participate in the crime of the mariner. They are equally hard-hearted; for, instead of at once condemning the crime, for selfish reasons they at first condone the offence, and afterwards, for equally selfish reasons, denounce the mariner. As, however, they have not had an actual share in the criminal deed, they are punished in a less degree; for it cannot be denied that the immediate termination of their sufferings by death is preferable to the lingering agony, the life-in-death, which the more terrible fate of the mariner has reserved for him. That death would have been a welcome relief to the mariner is evidenced by his own testimony:

Seven days, seven nights I saw that curse,  
And yet, I could not die.

And, as it is, the death of the sailors, while it is a punishment for their individual crime, must also have added materially to the burden of guilt which rested on the mariner's soul.

*Nature in the Poem.* — *The Ancient Mariner* deals with those common and general aspects of nature and of the sea with which Coleridge in childhood and early manhood had become definitely acquainted. In his treatment of these general aspects, however, it is his avowed aim "to excite the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature" and "to give the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of the imagination." Over the simple familiar phenomena he throws, therefore, the light of poetic imagination, "the light that never was on sea or land," raises them thus above the commonplace, and gives them a peculiar poetic charm. His faithful adherence to the truth of nature he secures mainly by a peculiar minuteness of detail and accuracy as to delicate shades of form and color—of which point stanza xxvii will serve as an appropriate illustration. His descriptions of tropical and polar scenes show to what



extent his imagination was able to assimilate and to reproduce in realistic fashion the facts for which he must have been indebted to his wide and various reading.

*Poetic Form.*—*The Ancient Mariner* is a successful adaptation of the Mediæval Ballad to suit the conditions of the nineteenth century literary world. It retains, of necessity, many of the qualities of the ballad proper,—rapidity and directness of action, simplicity of plot, character, and motive, the elemental view of nature, and in part the abruptness of style characteristic of middle age productions. But, on the other hand, it is noticeable that the supernaturalism of the poem is of a finer and more delicate nature than that of the older romantic legends and ballads, and that the poet has introduced into the poem a delicate psychological interest which would have been entirely out of place in the mediæval type. In the matter of style also, his work is found to be adapted to modern conditions, for, instead of the rough and ready versification, inaccurate metre, and oftentimes broken and in-harmonious lines of the older ballad literature, he has taken pains to make *The Ancient Mariner* an almost perfect example of flawless verse.

The usual ballad measure—the quatrain, composed of alternate iambic tetrameter and trimeter lines—is employed: but it will be noticed that, for the purpose of securing variety of effect, the poet takes various liberties with the measure, in length of line or of stanza, in rhyme, and in variety of foot.

*The Motto.*—The following is a translation of the Latin Motto prefixed to the poem:—

“I readily believe that there are more invisible beings in the universe than visible. But who will explain to us the nature of all these, the rank, relationships, distinguishing characteristics and functions of each? What is it they do? Where is it they dwell? Human thought ever circles around the knowledge of these mysteries, never touching the centre. Meanwhile it is, I confess, oft-times well pleasing to behold sketched upon the mind, as upon a tablet, a picture of the greater and better world; so shall the spirit, wonted to the petty concerns of daily life, not narrow itself overmuch, nor sink utterly into trivialities. But meanwhile we must diligently seek for truth, and maintain a temperate judgment, if we would distinguish certainty from uncertainty, day from night.” T. Burnet, *Archæol. Phil.*, p. 68 (Trans. George).

## PART I.

*Rime*.—"Rime" here means poem. Cf. Chaucer's *The Rym of Sir Thopas*. This spelling (Anglo-Saxon, *rīm*) is the correct one. The ordinary form *rhyme* is due to a confusion with the word *rhythm*.

1. **ancient** simply means *old*. In conversation Coleridge would speak of the mariner as the old navigator. Note the vivid present in these lines.

2. **one of three**. What numbers are met with most frequently in the poem? Why?

3. **By thy long gray beard**. A Turkish oath.

**glittering** suggests intensity of feeling and spiritual power.

11. **loon**. A base fellow. Cf. *Macbeth* v, 3, "Thou cream-faced loon."

12. **Eftsoons**. At once; immediately.

14-5. Insight into the soul's workings the result of a great spiritual crisis, gave him a strange power of fascination. Cf. Coleridge's own personal magnetism.

15-6. Contributed by Wordsworth.

21. The joyous morning of life.

22-4. **drop**. Used in a nautical sense—to move down the coast.

32. **bassoon**. A deep-toned musical instrument.

36. **The merry minstrelsy**. A body of minstrels.

41. Compare Arnold's *Rugby Chapel*: "Then on the height comes the storm." The very energy of youth leads to excesses.

Gloss. *Drawn by a storm*. Perhaps "driven" is meant.

55. **drifts**. Mist and snow driven before the wind. Cf. ll. 51 and 64. *Clifts*, an old form of *cliffs*—perhaps due to a confusion with *clefts*.

56. **sheen**. Brightness, splendor. Cognate with *show*; not connected with the verb *shine*.

57. **ken**. Literally, *know*: hence, *distinguish*, *descry*.

58. **all between**. All around—between the ship and the open sea.

57-62. Moral isolation. Spiritual coldness and discord.

62. **swound**. Swoon.

63. **Albatross**. A large aquatic bird with great breadth of wings and extraordinary powers of flight, often met with at great distance from

land off the Cape of Good Hope. The bird symbolizes a better intimation, speaking to the benumbed soul; see note on ll. 57-62.

64. **Thorough.** An archaic form of *through*—still retained in the word *thoroughfare*.

69. **thunder-fit.** A noise like thunder. Cf. l. 393 for the same word, *fit*, used in a different sense.

71. The ship, which had been going south, having passed through the polar region, is now going northward. Cf. also the Gloss.

74. Came in answer to the mariner's call.

75. **shroud.** "One of the supporting ropes that run from the mast-head to the side of the ship."

76. **vespers.** Evenings. (Lat. *vesper*, the evening star.) The word generally signifies *even song*.

**nine.** Odd numbers are generally associated with the mystical and supernatural. Three, five, seven and nine are the prevailing numbers in the poem

## PART II.

91. Note the sailors' superstitions regarding the killing of birds.

92. **'em.** An archaism. Not connected with *them*, but derived from A.S. *him*, dative plural of *he*, *heo*, *het*. Middle English *hem*.

97. **like God's own head.** Connected in sense with *sun*.

98. **uprist.** Strictly speaking, a present tense form. A variant of *upriseth*. Here used as a weak past of *uprise*.

104. Coleridge altered this line in 1817 to "The furrow streamed off free" but restored the original reading in 1823.

108. A lower state of moral degradation follows.

127. **reel and rout.** With a rapid, irregular, whirling motion.

128. **death-fires.** Phosphorescent lights seen sometimes in graveyards and by superstitious people believed to portend death, known also as *death lights*, *corpse candles*, *dead men's candles*, and *fetch-lights*.

129. **A witch's oils.** The use of colored fires to add to the mystery of the scene was a common device of necromancers.

Gloss. Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37-97), a Jewish historian. Author of "History of the Jewish Wars" and "Jewish Antiquities." Governor of Galilee about A.D. 66.

Michael Psellus (1020-1110), born in Constantinople. A Greek philosopher, author of many treatises on demonology, philosophy and science.

131. **assured.** Were made sure of what they had already suspected.

133. **Nine fathom.** The actual depth is of little importance. Nine is a mystical number.

137-8. Discuss the poetic value of the comparison.

141-2. Possibly suggested by the *Pilgrim's Progress*. The mariner is now haunted by the remembrance of his act.

### PART III.

152. **I wist.** Used in the sense of "*I thought*." "*It seemed to me*." *Wist* is the past tense form of the defective verb, *to wit*.

155. **dodged.** Not undignified in Coleridge's day.

**sprite.** A doublet of *spirit*.

156. A ship *tacks* when, in changing its course, it turns its head towards the wind; it *veers* when it turns from the wind.

157. Cf. *Lamentations* v, 10: "Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine." Likewise *Lamentations* iv, 8.

164. **Gramercy!** An exclamation of pleasure or surprise. (Fr. *grand merci*.)

169. **Without a breeze.** The maritime superstition regarding the existence of a Phantom Ship, whose movements were independent of wind or tide, has been frequently used as poetic material by other poets. The most common form of the superstition gives to the phantom vessel the name of *The Flying Dutchman* with which every one is familiar.

170. **steadies with upright keel.** Keeps steadily on her course without any wind to lay her over on one side.

184. **gossameres.** Filmy cobwebs, to be seen in the air on fine summer evenings. Supposed to be derived from *goose summer*, from the downy appearance of the threads. According to the old legend these are the remnants of the Virgin Mary's shroud that fell from her as she was translated.

188. **a Death.** The use of the indefinite article indicates that the mariner did not on first glance realize that 'the fleshless man' was actually Death himself. He considered it only a skeleton symbolizing

Death. In the next line he fully realizes who the woman's mate really is.

190-2. "Red lips and golden hair are certainly not in themselves repelling. It is only when we join to them *skin white as leprosy* that the picture becomes horrible,—the more horrible for the contrast." Bates.

These details of color are in keeping with the character of the woman, as implied in the name Life-in-Death.

193. **The Night-mare Life-in-Death.** *Night-mare.*—A dream at night, accompanied by pressure on the breast. The original sense of the word *mare* is 'crusher.' It has no connection with the word *mare*, a horse.

Taken in conjunction with the stanza following, these names imply that the life of the mariner henceforward is to be one long night-mare, a continuation of the agony of death throughout the remainder of life.

198. **whistles thrice.** By the superstitious sailor, whistling is regarded as ominous of evil.

199-200. These lines, depicting the instantaneous descent of tropical night, have been much admired. Cf. *Evangeline*, l. 978. "Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended."

Gloss. *The Courts of the Sun.*—The tropics.

203. **looked sideways up.** The natural attitude of fear.

204-5. Extreme joy or fear affects the regular action of the heart.

207. **his lamp.** A small lamp used to illuminate the compass.

209. **clomb.** Climbed. An archaism.

**bar.** "Edge of the Sea. Often it shows, at moon-rise, as a bright bar." Bates.

212. **the star-dogged Moon.** "It is a common superstition among sailors that something is going to happen when stars dog the moon."—Coleridge. As a matter of fact stars never appear within the lower tip of the horned moon.

223. It is noticeable that each of the first six divisions of the poem ends with some reference to the crime. The poet does not allow us to become engrossed with the marvellous and supernatural, the machinery of retribution, without at the same time persistently reminding us of the simple causes which set it in motion.



## PART IV.

224. As a result of what he has just heard (ll. 220-223) the Wedding Guest fears that the Ancient Mariner is a spirit also. (Cf. Gloss.) The personal appearance of the Mariner (ll. 225-229) tends to confirm him in his fear.

226-7. These lines are Wordsworth's.

227. *ribbed*. "Sea sand, at low tide, is marked by ripples, left by the receding waves." Bates.

236. *so beautiful*. In comparison with the *slimy things* (l. 238) and with his own *soul in agony* (l. 235).

245. *or ever*. *Or*—before (A.S. *Ær*, *ere*). In older literature the forms *or* and *ere* were frequently combined to form the expression *or ere*. The confusion of *ere* with *e'er* gave rise to the expression *or ever*.

244-7. Cf. *Hamlet* iii, 3 :

Pray can I not,  
Though inclination be as sharp as will :  
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent.

254. *reek*. To smoke, to steam ; to give forth an unpleasant smell.

264. Even the movement of the moon and stars increases, by contrast, the horror of his position on the motionless ship. Cf. the Gloss.

267-8. The white moonbeams, spread like April hoar-frost, gave an appearance of coldness to the ocean which was in mocking contrast to the real sultriness of the night.

270. *charmed*. So different from its ordinary appearance that it seemed to be under the influence of a spell or charm.

277-81. "Their color appears more clearly in the *still and awful red* of the ship's shadow." Bates.

282-91. "Here is the dramatic centre of the story." George.

"That one self-centred in crude egoism should be purified and converted through a new sympathy with suffering and sorrow, is a common piece of morality ; this purification through sympathy with joy, is a piece of finer and higher doctrine." Dowden.

## PART V.

297. *silly*. "The word has much changed its meaning. It meant 'timely' ; then lucky, happy, blessed, innocent, simple, foolish." Skeat. Here it means *empty, useless*.

298. *so*—that is, *silly, empty*.

302. *dank*. Damp, moist, humid.

306. **so light.** On account of the physical weakness resulting from his long prostration.

308. **blessèd.** In contrast with the physical and spiritual torture to which he had been subjected.

312. **sere.** Dry, parched, withered ; generally applied to leaves.

313-5. An electrical storm.

317. The stars were *wan* in contrast to the *fire-flags sheen*. The motion of the *fire-flags* made the stars appear to dance.

317. **sedge.** A grass-like or rush-like herb, generally found on the marshy edges of shallow lakes and streams.

325. **jag.** Prong, point or projection.

329. These incongruous details add to the weirdness of the situation.

337. **'gan.** *Gin* is an independent verb, not an abbreviation for *begin*. Hence the apostrophe should not be used. *Begin* is formed from this older verb *gin*.

348. **corse.** A variant of *corpse* (Lat. *corpus*, a body).

350. Visitors from the other world depart at dawn or at cockcrow.

352-3. It is the spirits, and not the mariners, who sing.

354-7. A poetical way of saying that high and rapid notes were followed by slow and subdued strains.

362. **jargoning.** "Fr. *Jargonner*—to speak fustian, jangle, chatter. The word is old and appears with the sense of the chattering of birds in the 13th century. Skeat."

365-6. A song so sweet that all nature is silent to listen.

367-8. Cf. ll. 374 and 381. Account for the noise made by the sails.

381-2. The ship having reached the equator, the Polar spirit can go no farther, but returns southward, after having been accorded "penance long and heavy for the Ancient Mariner." See the Gloss.

Bates comments as follows: "Here there is an inconsistency. The Gloss. to stanza xxv says: 'The ship sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.' Here the spirit carries the ship as far as the Line. How can he, if it be already there? Either the poet forgot the former stanza, or felt that poetic geography may take licenses."

387-8. The struggle of the angelic band with the Polar spirit. The latter is revengeful, and being loth to release the mariner, draws the ship back. The angelic spirits, pitying the mariner, urge the ship forward.

390. The ship is released from the control of the Polar spirit.

394. I have not to declare. I do not know, and hence cannot say.

395. my living life. My consciousness.

396. in my soul discerned. Although in a trance (l. 395) he is able to comprehend fully the conversation of the two spirits. The expression suggests that the spirit voices are finer and more subtle than the voices of human beings.

406. It has been suggested that the two spirits are "intended to represent justice and mercy—the one speaking angrily, the other soothingly."

407. honey-dew. A sweet substance exuded by insects and found in minute drops on the leaves of plants.

408. The mariner becomes acquainted with the nature of the agreement between the polar spirit and the angelic band.

#### PART VI.

414. Still. Silent, motionless.

424. A vacuum is created in front: the air rushing in from behind to fill it, carries the ship forward.

426-7. It is to be inferred that the spirits to whose conversation the mariner listens, are on their way to some celestial gathering, and fear that they will be late in arriving unless they go at a faster rate than the vessel.

432. After the disappearance of the spectre-bark in part iii, the whole action virtually proceeds in the moonlight. To the finer mental torture of Life-in-Death the softer light of the moon adds a weirdness unknown to the more turbulent scenes of the earlier half of the story.

435. charnel-dungeon. A vault in which dead bodies are deposited. *Charnel* and *carnal* are both derived from Lat. *caro*—flesh.

444-451. Having once looked 'far forth' over the ocean, he is afraid to turn his eyes again to the ship. See line 485.

445. else. Formerly.

448-451. "Coleridge," says Whipple, "gives in this passage poetic expression to what is in all men, though unconfessed, a supernatural fear in the heart, of something near us at which we dare not look." Cf. the Greek conception of Medusa, the Gorgon.

452, ff. "As the voyage approaches its conclusion, ordinary instrumentalities appear once more. There is first the rising of the soft familiar wind, 'like a meadow gale in spring,' then the blessed vision of the lighthouse top, the hill, the kirk, all those well-known realities which gradually relieve the absorbed excitement of the listener and favor his slow return to ordinary daylight." Mrs. Oliphant.

454-5. It did not cause a ripple, or even disturb the brightness of the surface.

458. *my fears*. See ll. 444-451.

467. *countree*. An archaic form, common in ballads.

470-1. "Let this prove real. But if it be a dream let me dream forever."

472-9. "How pleasantly, how reassuringly, the whole nightmare story is made to end among the clear fresh sounds and lights of the bay where it began." Walter Pater.

473. *it*. The water. *Strewn*—outspread.

475. *shadow*. Reflected image.

482-3. He has not yet turned his eyes to the deck. He therefore sees the reflected images of the seraph-band first.

489. *rood*. Cross.

490. *seraph-man*. The seraphs are angels of the highest order employed by Jehovah as his messengers. The word is, according to Skeat, connected with an Arabic word meaning *high* or *exalted*, rather than with the Hebrew *seraph*, to burn.

490-1. In his *Excursions in Criticism*, Wm. Watson comments unfavorably upon the retention of the supernatural element in the poem when the scene of the action has shifted itself back again once more to the known and familiar world.

494. *signals*. "Vessels at night summon a pilot by a flare, a flame blazing from the deck lighting spars and sails." Bates.

497. *No voice did they impart*. *To impart the voice*, is simply a circumlocution for *to speak*.

498-9. Notice the prominence that has been given to silence, since the expiation of the curse. Cf. ll. 453, 461, 479, 480, 498.

501. *cheer*. Hail.

504. The hermit represents the Christian charity; the Pilot, practical wisdom.

512. **shrieve.** An archaic form of *shrive*. To hear confession and give absolution of sin.

## PART VII.

514-22. These details give us some idea of the character of the Hermit's religion. It is sincere, but at the same time cheerful. He does not separate himself strictly from the world, but has evidently something of the evangelistic spirit.

524. **throw.** Think, believe.

531-7. "The description seems a little disproportionate. Does it add to our idea of leaves or sails?"—Bates. It certainly does add to the idea of the uncanny impression which the appearance of the sail produces.

535. **ivy-tod.** Ivy-bush. A dialect word.

552. The bodies of those who have been drowned, but not recovered, are said to come to the surface after a week or nine days.

556-9. The mention of the whirl and the echo serves to make the idea of the splitting of the bay and the dreadful sound much more vivid.

560-9. "With what consummate art we are left to imagine the physical traces which the mariner's long agony has left behind it, by a method far more terrible than any direct description, the effect, namely, which the sight of him produces upon others." Traill.

575. **crossed his brow.** Made the sign of the cross upon his brow. The sign of the cross was supposed to be a protection from the power of the Evil One.

586. Suggests the traditional *Wandering Jew* of mediæval romance.

605-9. Prayer and fellowship are the two things which the mariner in his loneliness had most desired.

612-5. "In *The Ancient Mariner* are the two great elements of the folk-tale, love of the marvellous,—the supernatural—and love of the lower animals." Black.

623. **of sense forlorn.** Explained by the preceding line.

625. **sadder.** On account of the nature of the story to which he had listened. **Wiser**—recognizing that the spiritual in life is of more importance than the pursuit of worldly pleasure.



## YOUTH AND AGE.

The three divisions of *Youth and Age* were composed at three, or perhaps four, different periods in the poet's life. In the opinion of Sara Coleridge, the poet's daughter, "the first stanza from 'Verse, a breeze,' to 'lived in't together,' was produced as late as 1824," and was "subsequently prefixed to the second stanza, 'Flowers are lovely,' which is said to have been composed many years before." The first five lines of the third stanza were composed in 1827, and the remaining six possibly as late as 1832, when they were incorporated in a sonnet entitled *The Old Man's Sigh*. The whole poem as it appeared in its present form was first published in 1834.

*Youth and Age* more than any other of Coleridge's poetic utterances embodies his own personal feelings of regret at his declining powers and at the unfulfilled promise of his youth. Even as early as 1802, thirty years before the publication of *Youth and Age*, he had already begun to look back in depression and despondency of spirit to a youth whose buoyancy and energy were already passing rapidly away :

There was a time when, though my path was rough,  
 This joy within me dallied with distress,  
 And all misfortunes were but as the stuff  
 Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness :  
 For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,  
 And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.  
 But now afflictions bow me down to earth ;  
 Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth,  
 But oh ! each visitation  
 Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,  
 My shaping spirit of imagination.

*Dejection.*

At the beginning of 1807, by which time he was already under the control of the opium habit, he found himself roused once more to the consciousness of time wasted and opportunities lost.

Ah ! as I listened with a heart forlorn,  
 The pulses of my being beat anew ;  
 And even as life returns upon the drowned,  
 Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of pains—  
 Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a babe  
 Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart ;  
 And fears self-willed, that shunned the eye of hope ;  
 And hope that scarce would know itself from fear ;  
 Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,  
 And genius given, and knowledge won in vain,

And all which I had culled in wood-walks wild,  
 And all which patient toil had reared, and all,  
 Commune with thee had opened out—but flowers  
 Strewed on my corse, and borne upon my bier,  
 In the same coffin, for the self-same grave!

*To William Wordsworth.*

The tone of *Youth and Age*, the pathetic lament, as it were of his old age, is perhaps, on the whole, less painful than that of his early utterances. It is the sadder, but more subdued and more musical expression of one who has become resigned to the inevitable, and whose poetic fancy plays regretfully over the ruins of the past.

**POETIC FORM.**—*Youth and Age* is a simple personal lyric of grief and regret, expressed in irregular stanza form and with irregular rhyme. The metre is iambic tetrameter, with, however, many variations in feet for the purpose of variety of effect.

**3. a-maying.** In the pursuit of enjoyment, or pleasure. The beginning of May was celebrated by the Romans by festivities in honor of Flora, the goddess of flowers. In England, in later times, the first of May (May-day) was observed as a general holiday, consecrated to Robin Hood and the maid Marian. It was customary upon that day for the villagers to set up May-poles and spend the day in archery, morris-dancing and other amusements.

**4. Poesy.** *Poetry.* Poesy is the non-colloquial and poetic form of the word.

Coleridge's poetical work was almost entirely produced before he had reached his thirtieth year. The six years between 1794 and 1800 was the period of his highest poetical activity.

**8. This breathing house not built with hands.** The body. The expression is probably suggested by Scripture. In *Ecclesiastes* xii, 3, the human body is compared to a house. Cf. also *II. Corinthians* v, 1, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

**9. that does me grievous wrong.** The physical pain consequent upon disease, and the gratification of his craving for opium have prevented the free exercise of his mental powers.

**10. aery.** A doublet of *airy*. *Aery* comes direct from the Latin *aer*. *Airy* comes from the same root, through the French *air*.

**11.** In ll. 8-11 there is a confusion of metaphor. In ll. 10-11 the body is compared to the flashing water of a rapid stream.

12-15. These lines are connected in sense with ll. 16-17, rather than with what precedes.

12. *those trim skiffs.* Steamboats. *Trim*—having a neat, smart, appearance ; less clumsy than sailing vessels. *Skiffs*—cognate with *ship*. A skiff is a small light boat. The steamboat appears like a skiff, in comparison with the old-fashioned sailing vessel.

*unknown of yore.* During the last twenty-five years of the eighteenth century many experiments were made in the direction of steam navigation. It was not, however, until the first decade of the nineteenth century it was found possible to use steamboats for commercial purposes. In 1801 Symington, in England, built a steamboat which was used as a canal tug, and in 1808 a steamboat built by Fulton plied regularly between New York and Boston.

13. At the date assigned by Sara Coleridge to the composition of this stanza, viz., 1824, steamships had already, for some years, been used for ocean navigation. In 1819 the first steamship crossed the Atlantic from New York to St. Petersburg, using sails, however, as well as steam, and in 1825 a steamboat made the passage from England to India.

16-17. It appears from various sources that, even in his best days, Coleridge's constitution was never very strong. Moreover, as these lines would indicate, he did not hesitate to put it to the severest of tests. We are told by Gilman that when a pupil in Christ's Hospital "he swam across the New River in his clothes and remained in them. Need we wonder to hear of jaundice and rheumatic fever, and that 'full half the time from seventeen to eighteen was passed in the sick ward.'" During one of his excursions in the Hartz Mountains some years later, we are told also that he walked forty miles in one day.

18. A periphrasis for *love is lovely*.

27. *a fond conceit.* A foolish notion or fancy. Both words are used here with their older signification.

33. *slips.* Small locks ; clusters of hair.

34. *alter'd size.* As he is described in his youth as inclining to be corpulent, it is probable that this expression indicates that he is growing thin.

33-6. He has all the characteristics of age—silvery locks, drooping gait, and altered size ; but none of the characteristics of youth—fresh lips and bright eyes. The conclusion to be drawn, therefore, is that he must be growing old.

37. A touch of the poet's philosophy, used to beguile his own dejection.

39-43. Just as dew-drops with the morning light upon them resemble gems, so is life in the period of youth made bright by the presence of hope ; and as dew-drops at the approach of darkness resemble tears, so is life also, in the period of old age, darkened and saddened by the absence of hope.

41. **a warning.** Reminding us by its continual weakness and pain that death is approaching.

45. In the weakness and frequent illness of old age, death at many times appears to be a certainty.

Concerning the old age of Coleridge, as portrayed in the last stanza, Hall Caine remarks :

"This great man was dying with the clear consciousness that the world had denied him his due. Long ago life had lost its charm of hope for him, and where no hope was, life was no better than the stern lamp of a ship that lights only the path that is past. The time had been when he had fretted under the sense of work without hope, and talents that he was compelled to waste. But that time was gone by. The fiery column that rose before his youth was the dark pillar that stood behind his age. He was reconciled to his dismissal ; he told the jest without the smile."

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# POETIC FORM.

## I.—VERSIFICATION.

Poetry is the expression, in its most adequate form, of thought touched with emotion. The natural language of emotion, if the feeling be not too violent, has always a perceptible rhythm more or less regular. And those whose appeal is to the passions but gratify and enlist a natural instinct in themselves, and their readers or hearers, by falling into a certain regulated and modulated, or rhythmical, flow of language. Rhythm, in its widest sense applicable to any symmetry of parts, as the arrangement of stones in a building, or movements in a dance, is, with us, restricted to mean a harmonious succession of sounds, and to rhythm, when made perfectly definite and regular by *measuring off* our words, we give the name *metre*. Metre is in general a quality of poetry : rhythm a quality of prose.

The metrical unit is the syllable, and the syllable may be viewed in three principal ways : as regards its *quality* or comparative shrillness or gravity ; as regards its *quantity* or length, and as regards its *accent* or stress. A metrical arrangement might therefore be a regular succession of shrill and grave sounds, of longs and shorts, or of accented and unaccented syllables. As a matter of fact, though a modifying influence in all poetry, quality or pitch has nowhere been made the basis of versification. Latin and Greek versification was based upon quantity ; English, and that of all other European languages, upon accent or stress. It must not be forgotten, however, that both quantity and quality are important modifying influences in English verse, and that a line composed entirely of short syllables or entirely of long syllables, or pitched in one uniform key, would be far from pleasing.

ACCENT is the stress thrown upon the pronunciation of a syllable. Every English word of two or more syllables has at least one syllable more loudly pronounced than the syllable or syllables next it. Sometimes two or more accents are distinctly heard, as in *incompatibility*. In a series of monosyllables again, stress is laid on those most important in sense. In English poetry the words are arranged so that accented and unaccented syllables recur at regular intervals.

A *foot* is a syllable or succession of two or more syllables, one of which must be accented. In the arrangement of the accented and unaccented



syllables of a foot, a certain degree of variety is possible. For instance, a foot may consist of two syllables only, an accented and an unaccented, and these may be arranged in either of two different ways. The accented may precede the unaccented, as in the line :

“Ar’t is lon’g, and tíme is fle’eting.”

The unit of measurement in this line is said to be *trochaic* ; or, on the other hand, the unaccented syllable may precede the accented, as in the line :

The flo’ating clo’uds their sta’té shall le’nd,

Such a foot is said to be *iambic*. But in the second place a foot may consist of three syllables, one accented and two unaccented, and, as a matter of course, these may be arranged in three different ways. The accented syllable may precede the unaccented, as in the line :

Sor’row and sílence are str’ong and pa’tient endu’rance is Go’dlike.

The standard foot in this line is said to be *dactylic*. The accented syllable may, however, occupy the second place, being both preceded and followed by an unstressed syllable, as in the line :

Dear ha’rp of my co’untry in sílence I fo’und thee.

The unit of measurement in this line is known as an *amphibrach* or *tribrach*. Lastly, the unaccented syllables may precede the accented, as in the line :

And his co’horts were gle’amíng in pur’ple and go’ld.

The foot in this line is said to be *anapestic*. To sum up, allowing *x* to stand for the accented and *a* for the unaccented, the five types of the metrical foot may be indicated as follows : (1) the Trochaic, *xa* ; (2) the Iambic, *ax* ; (3) the Dactylic, *xaa* ; (4) the Amphibrachic, *axa* ; (5) the Anapestic, *aa $\bar{x}$* . Of these five measures the iambic is by far the most common in English verse.

A *line* is a succession or combination of feet and may, of course, be long or short, according to the number of feet which it contains. Very short lines containing only two feet, and very long lines containing seven or even eight feet may sometimes be found, but an ordinary English verse does not generally contain less than three, or more than six feet. A line containing three feet is said to be *trimeter*, a line of four feet, *tetrameter*, a line of five feet, *pentameter*, and a line of six feet, *hexameter*.

QUANTITY or the length of time we dwell on sound or syllable makes a very perceptible difference in the flow of English verse. To illustrate,

Dr. Guest, in his History of English rhythms quotes the following passages where the verses, otherwise the same,—the same number of syllables and in the main the same disposition of accents—make very different impressions on the ear.

(a) Short vowels predominant :

The busy rivulet in humble valley  
Slippeth away in happiness ; it ever  
Hurrieth on, a solitude around, but  
Heaven above it.

(b) Long vowels predominant :

The lonely tarn that sleeps upon the mountain,  
Breathing a holy calm around, drinks ever  
Of the great presence, even in its slumber  
Deeply rejoicing.

Compare also Milton's *L'Allegro* with his *Il Penseroso*.

Quantity in English may vary indefinitely. It depends on the length of the vowels. The short vowels are a, e, i, o, u, as in *fathom*, *merry*, *pill*, *poll*, *pull*; the long vowels a, e, i, o, u, as in *father*, *Mary*, *peel*, *pall*, *pool*. A short vowel is not made long by position, as in the classical languages. A double consonant following rather tends to shorten a vowel, e.g., *smite*, *smitten*, *chide*, *chidden*.

*Pauses*.—Closely connected with quantity, as quickening or retarding the movement of the line, are *pauses*. In most English verse, a rest of the voice occurs at the end of the line. When the sense also pauses here the line is said to be *end-stopt*. When the sense does not pause it is called *run-on*. On the use or omission of this pause depends to a considerable degree the effect of the verse as a whole. Besides the natural pause at the end of the line, there is generally, especially in pentameter and hexameter lines, a medial pause, less correctly called the *caesura*. This pause was placed by the eighteenth century poets monotonously at or near the middle of the line, but by a freer disposition later poets have obtained many varieties of cadence. When this pause cuts a word in two, as in

The clime of the un | forgotten brave,

it is then properly called the *caesura*.

QUALITY, the comparative shrillness or gravity of the syllabic sound, is a scarcely less important modifying influence than quantity. To illustrate this, Professor Nichol quotes the following stanzas from Tennyson :

The splendour falls on castle walls,  
 And snowy summits old in story ;  
 The long light shakes across the lakes,  
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.

. . . . .  
 O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,  
 And thinner, clearer, farther going !  
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar,  
 The horns of elfland faintly blowing.

The time is the same, the accents the same ; but in the former, the full, low tones predominate ; in the latter, the shrill high ones.

To this category also belong melody, imitative harmony, alliteration and rhyme.

*Melody* is gained by the employment of a large proportion of vowels and liquids, and the omission of harsh consonants, and unmusical combinations. In ease of utterance, and therefore in melody, the vowels come first, then the liquids *l, m, ng* and *r*, and the sibilants *s, sh, z, zh* ; next the flat mutes *b, v, d, th (the) g* ; next the aspirates *j, th* and *h* ; and last, *p, t, k*.

*Imitative harmony*, or onomatopœia, is the attempt to produce a harmony of sound and sense. Some words in the language are plainly imitative in origin, *e.g.*, *cow, cuckoo, buzz, clang, whizz, bang, jingle*, etc. But "the delicate perceptions of the poet demand the gratification more frequently than it is supplied by the ordinary resources of language," and many examples may be obtained from our great poets in which imitative sounds have been made to assist in a fit and suitable expression of the thought. One can almost hear the bubbling of the cauldron, for example, in the witch's song in *Macbeth* :

For a charm of powerful trouble,  
 Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL— Double, double, toil and trouble,  
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

*Alliteration* means the fashion of beginning two or more of the words in a line with the same letter, *e.g.* :

Deep in a dungeon was the captive cast,  
 Deprived of day and held in fetters fast.

Concealed alliteration is where the alliteration might escape notice either because, as in

Our dreadful marches to delightful measures,

the alliterative letters are by a double alliteration separated from one another ; or because, as in

The league long roller thundering on the reef,

some of the alliterative letters are not in the initial but in the middle syllables of the words.

*Rhyme* is a similarity of sounds in syllables. Syllables are said to rhyme when they are identical from the vowel to the end. The consonants preceding the vowels must differ, the vowels (sounds) and succeeding consonants must be identical. Rhyme adds to the pleasurable element in verse. The ear is pleased with the regular recurrence of the same vowel sounds at the end of two or more lines. It must be borne in mind, however, that in addition to giving pleasure, the use of rhyme serves two other distinct purposes,—it adds special emphasis to the words containing the rhyming vowels, and at the same time serves to bind the verse together. As a matter of course, it will be seen that the rhyming vowel must be contained in the last accented syllable in the line. Hence the iambic measure, in which the line ends regularly with an accented syllable, is best suited to the use of rhyme. Should, however, the line end in an unaccented syllable, in which case the rhyming vowel is contained in the preceding syllable, the rhyme is said to be *double*, or *feminine*. The words *channel* and *panel*, for example, in the first stanza of *The Warden of the Cinque Ports*, constitutes a feminine rhyme.

Middle rhyme is a consonance occurring, as not infrequently, within the line, the effect of which is generally to quicken the line :

And ice mast-high came floating by.

Sectional rhyme is where the middle rhyme occurs in one-half of the line :

In *fight* and *flight*, nigh all their host was slain.

Inverse rhyme is the repetition of the same word or part of word within the line :

The piper *loud* and *louder* blew  
The dancers quick and quicker flew.

## II.—ENGLISH METRES.

RHYMED METRES are either *continuous* when the rhymes follow at the end of each line or in *stanzas*.

### CONTINUOUS RHYMED METRES.

*Iambic* measures.

(a) Quadrisyllabic :

To m'e the ro'se  
No lo'nger glo'wa.

*(b)* Octosyllabic, or tetrameter :

The w'ar that f'or a spa'ce did fa'il  
Now tre'bly thu'ndered o'n the g'ale.

*(c)* Decasyllabic, Pentameter, or Heroic Couplet :

Dam'n with faint pra'ise, assen't with c'vil le'er,  
A'nd without sn'eeing, te'ach the re'st to sn'eer.

*(d)* The Alexandrine or twelve-syllable Iambic :

That lik'e a wo'unded sn'ake drags it's slow len'gth alon'g.

*(e)* The fourteen-syllable iambic.

Betwix't Alci'des, kin'g of me'n, and The'tis' g'odlike s'on.

*Trochaic* measures :*(a)* The seven-syllable trochaic :

N'ot a st'ep is o'ut of tu'ne  
A's the tid'es ob'ey the m'oon.

*(b)* The fifteen syllable trochaic :

I' the he'r of al'l the a'ges i'n the fo'remost fi'les of ti'me.

*Dactylic* measures :*(a)* Two feet followed by a line with one dactyl and a long syllable :

Take her up te'nderly  
Li'ft her with ca're.

*(b)* Two feet repeated, followed by one and a trochee :

C'annon to rig'ht of them  
Ca'nnon to le'ft of them  
Volleyed and thundered.

*(c)* Three, and a final syllable :

Me'rri'ly, me'rri'ly, sha'll I live no'w.

*(d)* Three and a trochee :

Kn'ow ye the la'nd where the cy'press and m'yrtle.

*Anapestic* measures :*(a)* Three feet in alternately rhyming verse :

Not a pin'e in my gro've is there se'en  
But with ten'drils of wo'odbine is bou'nd.

*(b)* Four feet :

'Tis the la'st rose of su'mmer left bl'ooming alo'ne.



*Amphibrachs :*

- (a) Two alternating with one and an iambus :

The bla'ck bands | came o'ver  
The a'lps and | their sn'ow.

- (b) Two successive :

Most fri'endship | is fei'gning  
Most lo'ving | mere fo'lly |

- (c) Four :

There ca'me to | the bea'ch a | poor e'xile | of Erin.

## STANZAS.

The variety of stanza arrangement in English verse is almost indefinite. The most common stanza form is no doubt the quatrain or *ballad stanza* of four lines with alternate rhymes. In the majority of cases, however, the second and fourth lines of the quatrain will be found to contain a foot less than the first and third.

The *elegiac decasyllabic quatrain* appears in Gray's *Elegy* :

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day ;  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea ;  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

The seven-lined decasyllabic stanza or *Rhyme Royal*, used by Chaucer :

' My throte is cut unto my nekke boon,  
Seyde this child, ' and as by wey of kynde  
I sholde have dyed, ye, long tyme agoon,  
But Jesu Crist, as ye in bookes fynde,  
Wil that his glory last and be in mynde,  
And for the worship of his moder dere,  
Yet may I singe "O Alma," loude and clere.'

The *Ottava Rima* of Byron's *Don Juan* :

If here and there some transient trait of pity  
Was shown and some more noble heart broke through  
Its bloody bond, and saved, perhaps, some pretty  
Child, or an aged, helpless man or two—  
What's this in one annihilated city,  
Where thousand loves and ties and duties grow?  
Cockneys of London! Muscadins of Paris!  
Just ponder what a pious pastime war is.

The *Spenserian Stanza*, so called because it is used exclusively by Spenser in his *Faery Queen*, is composed of nine lines, eight iambic pentameters, followed by a ninth, which is iambic hexameter or Alexandrine. The rhyme scheme is as follows :—ababbcbcc. The Spenserian stanza

has been found especially suitable for the elaboration of a series of finished pictures, and for description combined with subdued emotion and reflection.

*The Sonnet* is the most complex of English metrical forms and requires the greatest skill and care in construction. It is composed of fourteen lines, which fall naturally into two divisions, known as the octave and the sestet. The octave contains eight lines, two quatrains with common rhymes as follows:—abba, abba. The sestet contains six lines, in the rhyme schemes of which much liberty is allowed. Sometimes only two rhymes are employed, as, for example, in *To Sleep*, or *Westminster Bridge*; but frequently three rhymes are introduced, as, for example, in the sonnet, *England and Switzerland*, or the two sonnets on *London, 1802*.

But, furthermore, as the rhyme scheme thus divides the sonnet into two parts, so also the thought of the sonnet falls regularly into two corresponding divisions. The first eight lines contain the preamble or introduction; the last six contain, in concise form, the statement of the main thought. The main thought is generally stated in the first three lines of the sestet, in which case the last three contain the conclusion or rounding off of the whole.

The merits of the sonnet as a form of English verse may be briefly summed up as follows: The length, fourteen lines, seems to be exactly suited for the development, in a concise form, of a single poetic conception. In the second place, the sonnet, with its fixed length and fixed rhyme-scheme, becomes, more than any other stanza form, a test of the artistic qualities of the poet, and a measure of his skill. Hence it gives to the reader a certain pleasure such as is derived from any work of art. Lastly, the form of the sonnet is such as to produce a pleasing musical effect. The Octave is a crescendo, which reaches its height in the first three lines of the sestet. The last three lines constitute the cadence, or dying away of the sound. It has been aptly compared to the music of a wave; the first eight lines the flow, the next three the breaking, and the last three the ebb.

#### UNRHYMED METRES.

Blank verse is the only unrhymed metre of much consequence in English verse. Its normal form is Iambic Pentameter, but it is more flexible than any of our other measures.

Choral measures, as in Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.

The English Hexameter, as in Longfellow's *Evangeline*.

## III.—CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO THOUGHT.

Considered with respect to subject-matter or thought, apart from metrical form, all poetry will, generally speaking, be found to fall into three main classes, *Epic*, *Lyric* and *Dramatic*. With the first two of these alone, it is necessary that this brief sketch should deal at any length.

## I. THE EPIC.

Epic poetry deals with the events of the past rather than with the immediate feelings of the poet himself. We lose sight of the poet entirely in our interest in the events which he narrates or describes, events which have actually happened, or are said to have happened. Hence the legitimate material for epic poetry is gathered from the great events in the nation's, or the world's, history, or from the legendary and mythical action of the heroic past. Thus, for instance, the *Iliad*, the great epic of Greek literature, deals entirely with the legendary history of the nation's struggle with Troy. The interest is entirely national, an interest of incident and event, of national glory and final conquest, and the personality of the writer or compiler is entirely forgotten in the interest of the events which he sings. But, besides the great epic, which deals with the grander movements of the historic or legendary past, several minor forms of epic poetry have arisen in later times, which are, as a general thing, shorter, more easily handled, and more suited to modern tastes and demands. These later forms of epic poetry have been classified as follows: (1) legendary poems and romances; (2) allegorical poems; (3) satirical poems; (4) reflective poems; (5) descriptive and pastoral poems (including the idyll); (6) the ballad. To the first of these classes, the historical legend, belongs *Evangeline*, and to the last, the ballad, belongs *The Wreck of the Hesperus*. Of these various forms, that of the ballad must be considered in further detail.

The *ballad* is markedly a Middle Age substitute for the longer epic forms, and as such, was usually sung by a minstrel before an audience who cared little for anything but the bald narration of stirring incidents and events. Hence the several characteristics which mark the modern ballad. It deals with the description of some stirring action; it is rude in form and language, and cares little for finer musical effects; it is direct, beginning at once with the events of the story, and passing

rapidly from one striking incident to another, without stopping for the introduction of detailed description or comment by the author.

## 2. THE LYRIC.

Lyric poetry deals almost entirely with the feelings of the poet, rather than with the description of actual incidents and events. Hence in the lyric, the personality of the poet himself is all-important, and the subject which calls forth his thoughts and feelings occupies, in reality, only a secondary place. Lyric poetry, furthermore, from the very variety of moods to which it gives expression, calls into use a great variety of metrical forms. The expression, moreover, of personal passion, grief, sorrow, joy demands a more rapid movement than the mere description of events. Hence in lyric poetry, as a general thing, the tetrameter and trimeter lines, as well as trochaic and anapestic measures, are frequently found. As the lyric covers the whole range of personal feelings and passions, a large number of divisions might be made. In the first place, we may classify lyric poetry according to the nature of the subject or theme which inspires the writer. Our personal emotions, for example, may be connected with love, religion, patriotism, nature, society, pleasure, sorrow, etc. Or on the other hand, with respect to the character of the emotion, English lyrics have been classified as (1) simple, (2) enthusiastic, (3) reflective. To the second class belongs the ode, and to the last class belongs the *sonnet*, which has already been described in a previous section. The lyrics of Longfellow are, for the most part, simple; those of Wordsworth, reflective.

## 3. THE DRAMA.

In both the Epic and the Lyric, the poet speaks directly of what he has seen, heard or experienced. In the Drama, on the other hand, instead of himself narrating the events of the past or describing his own personal emotions, he allows the characters of his story to speak entirely for themselves. The Drama has, in addition to action and emotion, character and plot, but in every case such character and plot are revealed entirely by the utterances of the speakers themselves. Of course it is possible for a poet, as, for example, Byron, to endue one of the chief personages in his drama with his own personal characteristics; but in the truly great drama the personality of the poet is perhaps even more truly concealed than in the Epic itself.



## IV.—RELATION OF FORM TO THOUGHT.

In poetry we seek to embody a thought, a fancy, or an emotion in artistic form. But it is not sufficient that the thought be poetic and the form artistic; the choice of artistic form must be suited to the nature of the poetic thought. If, for example, Wordsworth had attempted to embody the sentiment of the sonnet to Milton in the poetic form which he uses in his address to the Green Linnet, we would at once feel that the poetic effect was greatly weakened, if not entirely destroyed. In the choice, therefore, of the poetic form in which to embody poetic thought, the poet must exercise considerable judgment and taste. He must obviously first of all take into consideration the effect of his choice of metre, length of line, and stanza form, his use of rhyme, the disposal of his pauses and his choice of diction, figures of speech, etc. Each of these points must, accordingly, be separately considered.

The effect of the use of rhyme has already been noticed, viz., (1) To give additional importance to the rhyming words; (2) To bind together the sense in the rhymed lines. In the selections from Wordsworth, for example, the poem *To the Skylark*, in the stanza form which the quatrain is followed by a heroic couplet, might serve as a fair illustration of both of these effects. The unifying effect of rhyme is more noticeable, however, in the longer stanza forms, as, for example, the sonnet *To a Distant Friend*.

Upon the choice of metre depends largely the movement of the verse. Thus, for example, the Trochee, Anapæst, or Amphibrach are suited only for the expression of lightness, grace, and rapidity, and are commonly used in lyric poetry. The iambic measure, on the other hand, on account of its even metrical flow, is well-fitted for the expression of the ordinary poetic thought or fancy, and is, consequently, the most common metre in use. The effect of a certain metre may, of course, be modified by the more or less frequent introduction of other varieties of feet and by the use of feminine endings, which add a certain softness and melody to the verse. Of this latter device, Longfellow makes frequent use in his simpler lyrics. The length of line, however, has also an equally important part in the production of variety of effect. Thus, when the lighter measures are used we generally find short lines; with the iambic measure, on the other hand, we commonly find the pentameter line.

In the consideration of the stanza it will be seen, likewise, that certain forms are better suited to the expression of particular sentiments



than others. For example, the heroic couplet, with its plain and simple movement, is well suited to narration, to didactic poetry—indeed, to all classes of poetry whose chief aim is to convey information in a clear, direct and pointed manner. The quatrain, by its very shortness and capability of varied effects, is better suited than any other form to the majority of lyrical utterances. The Spenserian stanza by its length, and the sonorous effect which the Alexandrine gives to it, is best suited to description; and to reflection tinged with subdued passion. The sonnet, on the other hand, by its fixity of form and measured movement, is unfitted for the expression of anything but the reflective and meditative, or subdued and restrained feeling.

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## APPENDIX.

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SELECTIONS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING.



# COLERIDGE.

## THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

### IN SEVEN PARTS.

“Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit, et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? Quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari; ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutiis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus.”—T. BURNET, *Archæol. Phil.* p. 68.

### PART I.

An ancient  
Mariner meet-  
eth three Gal-  
lants bidden to  
a wedding-feast,  
and detaineth  
one.

It is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of three.  
“By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,  
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,      5  
And I am next of kin;  
The guests are met, the feast is set:  
May'st hear the merry din.”

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
“There was a ship,” quoth he.      10  
“Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!”  
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-  
Guest is spell-  
bound by the  
eye of the old  
seafaring man,  
and constrained  
to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—  
The Wedding-Guest stood still,  
And listens like a three years' child:      15  
The Mariner hath his will.



The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone :  
 He cannot choose but hear ;  
 And thus spake on that ancient man,  
 The bright-eyed Mariner:—

20

“The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,  
 Merrily did we drop  
 Below the kirk, below the hill,  
 Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner  
 tells how the  
 ship sailed  
 southward with  
 a good wind and  
 fair weather, till  
 it reached the  
 line.

The sun came up upon the left,  
 Out of the sea came he !  
 And he shone bright, and on the right  
 Went down into the sea.

25

Higher and higher every day,  
 Till over the mast at noon”—  
 The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,  
 For he heard the loud bassoon.

30

The Wedding-  
 Guest heareth  
 the bridal  
 music ; but the  
 Mariner con-  
 tinueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,  
 Red as a rose is she ;  
 Nodding their heads before her goes  
 The merry minstrelsy.

35

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,  
 Yet he cannot choose but hear ;  
 And thus spake on that ancient man,  
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

40

The ship drawn  
 by a storm  
 towards the  
 south pole.

“And now the storm-blast came, and he  
 Was tyrannous and strong :  
 He struck with his o’ertaking wings,  
 And chased us south along.





*From Doré's Illustrations to the Ancient Mariner.*

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
The ice was all around ;  
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,  
Like noises in a swound.

With sloping masts and dipping prow, 45  
 As who pursued with yell and blow  
 Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
 And forward bends his head,  
 The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,  
 And southward aye we fled. 50

And now there came both mist and snow,  
 And it grew wondrous cold :  
 And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
 As green as emerald.

The land of ice,  
 and of fearful  
 sounds, where  
 no living thing  
 was to be seen.

And through the drifts, the snowy cliffs 55  
 Did send a dismal sheen :  
 Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—  
 The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
 The ice was all around : 60  
 It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,  
 Like noises in a swound !

Till a great sea-  
 bird, called the  
 Albatross, came  
 through the  
 snow-fog, and  
 was received  
 with great joy  
 and hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross :  
 Thorough the fog it came ;  
 As if it had been a Christian soul,  
 We hailed it in God's name. 65

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,  
 And round and round it flew.  
 The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;  
 The helmsman steered us through ! 70

And lo! the  
 Albatross  
 proveth a bird  
 of good omen,  
 and followeth  
 the ship as it  
 returned north-  
 ward through  
 fog and floating  
 ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind ;  
 The Albatross did follow,  
 And every day, for food or play,  
 Came to the mariners' hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud, 75  
 It perched for vespers nine ;  
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,  
 Glimmered the white moon-shine."

The ancient  
 Mariner inhospitably  
 killeth the pious bird  
 of good omen.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner,  
 From the fiends that plague thee thus!— 80  
 Why look'st thou so?"—"With my cross-bow  
 I shot the Albatross!"

## PART II.

"The sun now rose upon the right :  
 Out of the sea came he,  
 Still hid in mist, and on the left 85  
 Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,  
 But no sweet bird did follow,  
 Nor any day for food or play  
 Came to the mariners' hollo! 90

His shipmates  
 cry out against  
 the ancient  
 Mariner, for  
 killing the bird  
 of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,  
 And it would work 'em woe ;  
 For all averred, I had killed the bird  
 That made the breeze to blow.  
 Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay, 95  
 That made the breeze to blow!

But when the  
 fog cleared off,  
 they justify the  
 same, and thus  
 make them-  
 selves accom-  
 plices in the  
 crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,  
 The glorious Sun uprist :  
 Then all averred, I had killed the bird  
 That brought the fog and mist. 100  
 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
 That bring the fog and mist.







*The Calm.*

Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

TO FACE PAGE 5, ANCIENT MARINER

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free ;  
We were the first that ever burst  
105 Into that silent sea.

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be ;  
And we did speak only to break  
110 The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,  
115 We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink ;  
120 Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !  
That ever this should be !  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
125 Upon the slimy sea.

A spirit had followed them ; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither

About, about, in reel and rout  
The death-fires danced at night ;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
130 Barnt green and blue and white.

departed souls  
nor angels;  
concerning  
whom the  
learned Jew,  
Josephus, and  
the Platonic  
Constantinopo-  
litan, Michael  
Psellus, may be  
consulted.  
They are very  
numerous, and  
there is no cli-  
mate or element  
without one or  
more.

And some in dreams assured were  
Of the spirit that plagued us so;  
Nine fathom deep he had followed us  
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought, 135  
Was withered at the root;  
We could not speak, no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.

The shipmates,  
in their sore  
distress would  
fain throw the  
whole guilt on  
the ancient  
Mariner; in sign  
whereof they  
hang the dead  
sea-bird round  
his neck.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks 140  
Had I from old and young!  
Instead of the Cross, the Albatross  
About my neck was hung.

## PART III.

“There passed a weary time. Each throat  
Was parched, and glazed each eye.  
A weary time! a weary time! 145  
How glazed each weary eye!  
When looking westward, I beheld  
A something in the sky.

The ancient  
Mariner behold-  
eth a sign in the  
element afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,  
And then it seemed a mist; 150  
It moved and moved, and took at last  
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!  
And still it neared and neared:  
And as if it dodged a water-sprite, 155  
It plunged, and tacked, and veered.

At its nearer  
approach, it  
seemeth him to

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,  
We could nor laugh nor wail;

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

be a ship; and  
at a dear ran-  
som he freeth  
his speech from  
the bonds of  
thirst.

Through utter drought all dumb we stood !  
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,  
And cried, A sail ! a sail !

160

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,  
Agape they heard me call :

A flash of joy. Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,  
And all at once their breath drew in,  
As they were drinking all.

165

And horror fol-  
lows; for can it  
be a ship that  
comes onward  
without wind  
or tide ?

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !  
Hither to work us weal ;  
Without a breeze, without a tide,  
She steadies with upright keel !

170

The western wave was all a-flame,  
The day was well-nigh done !  
Almost upon the western wave  
Rested the broad bright sun ;  
When that strange shape drove suddenly  
Betwixt us and the sun.

175

It seemeth him  
but the skele-  
ton of a ship.

And straight the sun was flecked with bars,  
(Heaven's Mother send us grace !)  
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered  
With broad and burning face.

180

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)  
How fast she nears and nears !  
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,  
Like restless gossameres ?

And its ribs are  
seen as bars on  
the face of the  
setting sun.  
The spectre-  
woman and her

Are those her ribs through which the Sun  
Did peer, as through a grate ?  
And is that Woman all her crew ?

185



death-mate,  
and no other  
on board the  
skeleton ship.  
Like vessel, like  
crew!

Is that a Death? and are there two?  
Is Death that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free, 190  
Her locks were yellow as gold:  
Her skin was as white as leprosy,  
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,  
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and Life-  
in-Death have  
diced for the  
ship's crew, and  
she (the latter)  
winneth the  
ancient Marin-  
er.

The naked hulk alongside came, 195  
And the twain were casting dice;  
"The game is done! I've won, I've won!"  
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight  
within the  
courts of the  
sun.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:  
At one stride comes the dark; 200  
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,  
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising of  
the moon.

We listened and looked sideways up!  
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,  
My life-blood seemed to sip! 205  
The stars were dim, and thick the night,  
The steerman's face by his lamp gleamed white;  
From the sails the dew did drip—  
Till clomb above the eastern bar  
The horned Moon, with one bright star 210  
Within the nether tip.

One after  
another.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,  
Too quick for groan or sigh,  
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,  
And cursed me with his eye. 215

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

His shipmates  
drop down  
dead.      Four times fifty living men,  
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)  
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,  
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-  
Death begins  
her work on the  
ancient Mariner.      The souls did from their bodies fly,—      220  
They fled to bliss or woe!  
And every soul, it passed me by,  
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

PART IV.

The Wedding-  
guest feareth  
that a spirit is  
talking to him.      "I fear thee, ancient Mariner!  
I fear thy skinny hand!      225  
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,  
As is the ribbed sea-sand.<sup>1</sup>  
I fear thee and thy glittering eye,  
And thy skinny hand so brown."—

But the ancient  
Mariner as-  
sureth him of  
his bodily life,  
and proceedeth  
to relate his  
horrible pen-  
ance.      "Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!      230  
This body dropt not down.  
Alone, alone, all all alone,  
Alone on a wide wide sea!  
And never a saint took pity on  
My soul in agony.      235

He despiseth  
the creatures of  
the calm.      The many men, so beautiful!  
And they all dead did lie:  
And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth  
that they should  
live, and so  
many lie dead.      I looked upon the rotting sea,      240  
And drew my eyes away;  
I looked upon the rotting deck,  
And there the dead men lay.

<sup>1</sup> "For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797 that this poem was planned, and in part composed."

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray  
 But or ever a prayer had gusht, 245  
 A wicked whisper came, and made  
 My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,  
 And the balls like pulses beat ;  
 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky, 250  
 Lay like a load on my weary eye,  
 And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse  
 liveth for him  
 in the eye of  
 the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,  
 Nor rot nor reek did they :  
 The look with which they looked on me 255  
 Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell  
 A spirit from on high ;  
 But oh ! more horrible than that  
 Is the curse in a dead man's eye ! 260  
 Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,  
 And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness  
 and fixedness  
 he yearneth to-  
 wards the  
 journeying  
 moon, and the  
 stars that still  
 sojourn, yet still  
 move onward ;  
 and everywhere  
 the blue sky be-  
 longs to them,  
 and is their  
 appointed rest,  
 and their native  
 country and  
 their own  
 natural homes,  
 which they enter  
 unannounced,  
 as lords that are  
 certainly ex-  
 pected, and yet  
 there is a silent  
 joy at their  
 arrival.

The moving moon went up the sky,  
 And nowhere did abide :  
 Softly she was going up, 265  
 And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,  
 Like April hoar-frost spread ;  
 But where the ship's huge shadow lay,  
 The charmed water burnt alway 270  
 A still and awful red.

## THE ANCIENT MARINER.

*By the light of  
the Moon he be-  
holdeth God's  
creatures of the  
great calm.*

Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watched the water-snakes :  
They moved in tracks of shining white,  
And when they reared, the elfish light  
Fell off in hoary flakes. 275

Within the shadow of the ship  
I watched their rich attire :  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
They coiled and swam ; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire. 280

*Their beauty  
and their  
happiness.*

O happy living things ! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare :  
A spring of love gushed from my heart,  
And I blessed them unaware ! 285

*He bleaseth  
them in his  
heart.*

Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I blessed them unaware.

*The spell begins  
to break.*

The selfsame moment I could pray ;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea. 290

### PART V.

“ O sleep ! it is a gentle thing,  
Beloved from pole to pole !  
To Mary Queen the praise be given !  
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,  
That slid into my soul. 295

*By grace of the  
boly Mother,  
the ancient  
Mariner is re-  
freshed with  
rain.*

The silly buckets on the deck,  
That had so long remained,  
I dreamt that they were filled with dew ;  
And when I awoke, it rained. 300

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,  
 My garments all were dank ;  
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,  
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :           305  
 I was so light—almost  
 I thought that I had died in sleep,  
 And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth  
 sounds and  
 seeth strange  
 sights and com-  
 motions in the  
 sky and the ele-  
 ment.

And soon I heard a roaring wind :  
 It did not come anear ;                               310  
 But with its sound it shook the sails,  
 That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !  
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,  
 To and fro they were hurried about !           315  
 And to and fro, and in and out,  
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,  
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ;  
 And the rain poured down from one black cloud : 320  
 The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
 The moon was at its side :  
 Like waters shot from some high crag,  
 The lightning fell with never a jag,               325  
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies of  
 the ship's crew  
 are ispirited,  
 and the ship  
 moves on :

The loud wind never reached the ship,  
 Yet now the ship moved on !  
 Beneath the lightning and the moon  
 The dead men gave a groan.                       330







*After the Calm.*

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the sun :  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.

TO FACE PAGE 13, ANCIENT MARINER

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,  
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;  
 It had been strange, even in a dream,  
 To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered ; the ship moved on ; 335  
 Yet never a breeze up-blew ;  
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
 Where they were wont to do ;  
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—  
 We were a ghastly crew. 340

The body of my brother's son  
 Stood by me, knee to knee :  
 The body and I pulled at one rope,  
 But he said nought to me”

but not by the  
 souls of the  
 men, nor by de-  
 mons of earth  
 or middle air,  
 but by a blessed  
 troop of angelic  
 spirits, sent  
 down by the in-  
 vocation of the  
 guardian saint.

“ I fear thee, ancient Mariner !” 345  
 “ Be calm thou Wedding-Guest !  
 ’Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
 Which to their corpses came again,  
 But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms, 350  
 And cluster'd round the mast ;  
 Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,  
 And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
 Then darted to the sun ; 355  
 Slowly the sounds came back again,  
 Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
 I heard the sky-lark sing ;  
 Sometimes all little birds that are, 360

How they seemed to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute ;  
And now it is an angel's song, 365  
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon,  
A noise like of a hidden brook 370  
In the leafy month of June,  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,  
Yet never a breeze did breathe :  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship, 375  
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome spirit from the south pole carries on the ship as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,  
From the land of mist and snow,  
The spirit slid ; and it was he 380  
That made the ship to go.  
The sails at noon left off their tune,  
And the ship stood still also.

The sun, right up above the mast,  
Had fixed her to the ocean ;  
But in a minute she 'gan stir, 385  
With a short uneasy motion—  
Backwards and forwards half her length  
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,  
She made a sudden bound : 390

It flung the blood into my head,  
And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,  
I have not to declare ;  
But ere my living life returned, 395  
I heard, and in my soul discerned,  
Two voices in the air.

“ Is it he ! ” quoth one, “ Is this the man ?  
By Him who died on cross,  
With his cruel bow he laid full low 400  
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself  
In the land of mist and snow,  
He loved the bird that loved the man  
Who shot him with his bow.” 405

The other was a softer voice,  
As soft as honey-dew :  
Quoth he, “ The man hath penance done,  
And penance more will do.”

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE.

“ But tell me, tell me ! speak again, 410  
Thy soft response renewing—  
What makes that ship drive on so fast ?  
What is the Ocean doing ? ”

SECOND VOICE.

“ Still as a slave before his lord,  
The Ocean hath no blast ; 415  
His great bright eye most silently  
Up to the moon is cast—



If he may know which way to go ;  
 For she guides him smooth or grim.  
 See, brother, see! how graciously  
 She looketh down on him. 420

## FIRST VOICE.

The Mariner  
 hath been cast  
 into a trance ;  
 for the angelic  
 power causeth  
 the vessel to  
 drivenorthward  
 faster than  
 human life  
 could endure.

“ But why drives on that ship so fast,  
 Without or wave or wind ? ”

## SECOND VOICE.

“ The air is cut away before,  
 And closes from behind. 425

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!  
 Or we shall be belated :  
 For slow and slow that ship will go,  
 When the Mariner's trance is abated.

The super-  
 natural motion  
 is retarded ; the  
 Mariner awakes,  
 and his penance  
 begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on 430  
 As in a gentle weather :  
 'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high ;  
 The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,  
 For a charnel-dungeon fitter : 435  
 All fixed on me their stony eyes,  
 That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,  
 Had never passed away :  
 I could not draw my eyes from theirs, 440  
 Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is  
 finally expiated

And now this spell was snapt : once more  
 I viewed the ocean green,  
 And looked far forth, yet little saw  
 Of what had else been seen— 445

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

Like one, that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round, walks on,  
And turns no more his head ;  
Because he knows a frightful fiend 450  
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
Nor sound nor motion made :  
Its path was not upon the sea,  
In ripple or in shade. 455

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek  
Like a meadow-gale of spring—  
It mingled strangely with my fears,  
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship, 460  
Yet she sailed softly too :  
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
On me alone it blew.

And the ancient  
Mariner behold-  
eth his native  
country.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed  
The lighthouse top I see ?  
Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?  
Is this mine own countree ? 465

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,  
And I with sobs did pray—  
'O let me be awake, my God !  
Or let me sleep alway.' 470

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,  
So smoothly it was strewn !  
And on the bay the moonlight lay,  
And the shadow of the moon. 475

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,  
That stands above the rock :  
The moonlight steeped in silentness  
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light, 480  
Till rising from the same,  
Full many shapes, that shadows were,  
In crimson colours came.

The angello  
spirits leave the  
dead bodies,

and appear in  
their own forms  
of light.

A little distance from the prow  
Those crimson shadows were : 485  
I turned my eyes upon the deck—  
Oh Christ ! what saw I there !

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
And, by the holy rood !  
A man all light, a seraph-man, 490  
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :  
It was a heavenly sight !  
They stood as signals to the land,  
Each one a lovely light ; 495

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :  
No voice did they impart—  
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank  
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500  
I heard the Pilot's cheer ;  
My head was turned perforce away,  
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,  
 I heard them coming fast : 505  
 Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy  
 The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice :  
 It is the Hermit good !  
 He singeth loud his godly hymns 510  
 That he makes in the wood.  
 He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away  
 The Albatross's blood.

PART VII.

The Hermit of  
 the wood This Hermit good lives in that wood  
 Which slopes down to the sea. 515  
 How loudly his sweet voice he rears !  
 He loves to talk with marineres  
 That come from a far countree

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—  
 He hath a cushion plump : 520  
 It is the moss that wholly hides  
 The rotted old oakstump.

The skiff-boat neared : I heard them talk,  
 " Why, this is strange, I trow !  
 Where are those lights so many and fair, 525  
 That signal made but now ? "

approacheth the  
 ship with  
 wonder. " Strange, by my faith ! " the Hermit said—  
 " And they answered not our cheer !  
 The planks look warped ! and see those sails,  
 How thin they are and sere ! 530  
 I never saw aught like to them,  
 Unless perchance it were.

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag  
 My forest-brook along ;  
 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow, 535  
 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,  
 That eats the she-wolf's young."

"Dear Lord ! it hath a fiendish look—  
 (The Pilot made reply)  
 I am a-feared"—"Push on, push on !" 540  
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,  
 But I nor spake nor stirred ;  
 The boat came close beneath the ship,  
 And straight a sound was heard. 545

The ship sud-  
 denly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,  
 Still louder and more dread :  
 It reached the ship, it split the bay ;  
 The ship went down like lead.

The ancient  
 Mariner is saved  
 in the Pilot's  
 boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound, 550  
 Which sky and ocean smote,  
 Like one that hath been seven days drowned  
 My body lay afloat ;  
 But swift as dreams, myself I found  
 Within the Pilot's boat. 555

Upon the whirl where sank the ship,  
 The boat spun round and round ;  
 And all was still, save that the hill  
 Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips--the Pilot shrieked 560  
 And fell down in a fit ;



The holy Hermit raised his eyes,  
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars : the Pilot's boy,  
Who now doth crazy go, 565  
Laughed loud and long, and all the while  
His eyes went to and fro.  
"Ha ! ha !" quoth he, "full plain I see  
The Devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countree, 570  
I stood on the firm land !  
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,  
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient  
Mariner earnestly entreateth  
the Hermit to  
shrieve him ;  
and the penance  
of life falls on  
him.

"O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man !"  
The Hermit crossed his brow. 575  
"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say—  
What manner of man art thou !"

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched  
With a woful agony,  
Which forced me to begin my tale ; 580  
And then it left me free.

And ever and  
anon through-  
out his future  
life an agony  
constraineth  
him to travel  
from land to  
land ;

Since then, at an uncertain hour,  
That agony returns :  
And till my ghastly tale is told,  
This heart within me burns. 585

I pass, like night, from land to land ;  
I have strange power of speech ;  
The moment that his face I see,  
I know the man that must hear me :  
To him my tale I teach. 590

What loud uproar bursts from that door !  
 The wedding-guests are there :  
 But in the garden-bower the bride  
 And bride-maids singing are :  
 And hark the little vesper bell, 595  
 Which biddeth me to prayer !

O Wedding-guest ! this soul hath been  
 Alone on a wide, wide sea :  
 So lonely 'twas, that God himself  
 Scarce seemed there to be. 600

O sweeter than the marriage feast,  
 'Tis sweeter far to me,  
 To walk together to the kirk  
 With a goodly company !—

To walk together to the kirk, 605  
 And all together pray,  
 While each to his great Father bends,  
 Old men, and babes, and loving friends,  
 And youths and maidens gay !

and to teach, by  
 his own ex-  
 ample, love and  
 reverence to all  
 things that God  
 made and lov-  
 eth.

Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell 610  
 To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !  
 He prayeth well who loveth well  
 Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best 615  
 All things both great and small ;  
 For the dear God who loveth us,  
 He made and loveth all”

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,  
 Whose beard with age is hoar,

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest 620  
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,  
And is of sense forlorn :  
A sadder and a wiser man,  
He rose the morrow morn. 625



## SELECTION FROM COLERIDGE.

### 2.—YOUTH AND AGE.

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,  
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—  
Both were mine! Life went a maying  
    With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,  
        When I was young! 5  
When I was young?—Ah, woful when!  
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!  
This breathing house not built with hands,  
This body that does me grievous wrong,  
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands 10  
How lightly then it flash'd along:—  
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,  
On winding lakes and rivers wide,  
That ask no aid of sail or oar,  
That fear no spite of wind or tide! 15  
Nought cared this body for wind or weather  
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;  
Friendship is a sheltering tree;  
O! the joys, that came down shower-like, 20  
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,  
    Ere I was old!  
Ere I was old? Ah woful Ere,  
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!  
O Youth! for years so many and sweet, 25  
'Tis known that Thou and I were one,

I'll think it but a fond conceit—  
 It cannot be, that Thou art gone !  
 Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd :—  
 And thou wert aye a masker bold ! 30  
 What strange disguise hast now put on  
 To make believe that Thou art gone ?  
 I see these locks in silvery slips,  
 This drooping gait, this alter'd size :  
 But Springtide blossoms on thy lips, 35  
 And tears take sunshine from thine eyes !  
 Life is but Thought : so think I will  
 That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,  
 But the tears of mournful eve ! 40  
 Where no hope is, life's a warning  
 That only serves to make us grieve  
                                   When we are old :  
 —That only serves to make us grieve  
 With oft and tedious taking-leave, 45  
 Like some poor nigh-related guest  
 That may not rudely be dismiss,  
 Yet hath out-stay'd his welcome while,  
 And tells the jest without the smile.





### 3.—MICHAEL.

#### A PASTORAL POEM.

If from the public way you turn your steps  
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,  
You will suppose that with an upright path  
Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent  
The pastoral mountains front you, face to face. 5  
But, courage ! for around that boisterous brook  
The mountains have all opened out themselves,  
And made a hidden valley of their own.  
No habitation can be seen ; but they  
Who journey hither find themselves alone 10  
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites  
That overhead are sailing in the sky.

It is, in truth, an utter solitude ;  
 Nor should I have made mention of this dell  
 But for one object which you might pass by, 15  
 Might see and notice not. Beside the brook  
 Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones ;  
 And to that place a story appertains  
 Which, though it be ungarnished with events,  
 Is not unfit, I deem, for the fireside 20  
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first  
 Of those domestic tales that spake to me  
 Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men  
 Whom I already loved ;—not, verily,  
 For their own sakes, but for the fields-and hills 25  
 Where was their occupation and abode.  
 And hence this tale, while I was yet a boy  
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power  
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency  
 Of natural objects led me on to feel 30  
 For passions that were not my own, and think  
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)  
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.  
 Therefore, although it be a history  
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same 35  
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;  
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake  
 Of youthful poets, who among these hills  
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40  
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name ;  
 An old man, stout of heart and strong of limb.  
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
 Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,  
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs, 45

And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt  
 And watchful more than ordinary men.  
 Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,  
 Of blasts of every tone ; and oftentimes,  
 When others heeded not, He heard the South 50  
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock  
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,  
 "The winds are now devising work for me !" 55  
 And, truly, at all times, the storm—that drives  
 The traveller to a shelter—summoned him  
 Up to the mountains : he had been alone  
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists  
 That came to him and left him on the heights. 60  
 So lived he till his eightieth year was past.  
 And grossly that man errs who should suppose  
 That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,  
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.  
 Fields where with cheerful spirits he had breathed 65  
 The common air ; the hills which he so oft  
 Had climbed with vigorous steps, which had impressed  
 So many incidents upon his mind  
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;  
 Which, like a book, preserved the memory 70  
 Of the dumb animals whom he had saved,  
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts  
 The certainty of honourable gain—  
 Those fields, those hills (what could they less ?), had laid  
 Strong hold on his affections ; were to him 75  
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.  
 His helpmate was a comely matron, old—

Though younger than himself full twenty years. 80  
 She was a woman of a stirring life,  
 Whose heart was in her house. Two wheels she had  
 Of antique form—this large for spinning wool,  
 That small for flax ; and if one wheel had rest,  
 It was because the other was at work. 85  
 The Pair had but one inmate in their house,  
 An only Child, who had been born to them  
 When Michael, telling o'er his years, began  
 To deem that he was old—in shepherd's phrase,  
 With one foot in the grave. This only Son, 90  
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,  
 The one of an inestimable worth,  
 Made all their household. I may truly say,  
 That they were as a proverb in the vale  
 For endless industry. When day was gone, 95  
 And from their occupations out-of-doors  
 The Son and Father were come home, even then  
 Their labour did not cease ; unless when all  
 Turned to their cleanly supper-board, and there,  
 Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk, 100  
 Sat round their basket piled with oaten cakes,  
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when their meal  
 Was ended, Luke (for so the son was named)  
 And his old Father both betook themselves  
 To such convenient work as might employ 105  
 Their hands by the fireside : perhaps to card  
 Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair  
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,  
 Or other implement of house or field.  
  
 Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge, 110  
 That in our ancient uncouth country style  
 Did with a huge projection overbrow

Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
 Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp—  
 An aged utensil, which had performed 115  
 Service beyond all others of its kind.  
 Early at evening did it burn, and late,  
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,  
 Which, going by from year to year, had found,  
 And left the couple neither gay, perhaps, 120  
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,  
 Living a life of eager industry.  
 And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,  
 There by the light of this old lamp they sat,  
 Father and Son, while late into the night 125  
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,  
 Making the cottage through the silent hours  
 Murnur as with the sound of summer flies.  
 This light was famous in its neighbourhood,  
 And was a public symbol of the life 130  
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,  
 Their cottage on a plot of rising ground  
 Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,  
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,  
 And westward to the village near the lake ; 135  
 And from this constant light, so regular  
 And so far seen, the house itself, by all  
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,  
 Both old and young, was named The Evening Star.

Thus living on through such a length of years, 140  
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs  
 Have loved his Helpmate ; but to Michael's heart  
 This son of his old age was yet more dear—  
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the same  
 Blind spirit which is in the blood of all— 145



Than that a child more than all other gifts  
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,  
 And stirrings of inquietude, when they  
 By tendency of nature needs must fail.—  
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him, 150  
 His heart and his heart's joy. For oftentimes  
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,  
 Had done him female service, not alone  
 For pastime and delight, as is the use  
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced 155  
 To acts of tenderness ; and he had rocked  
 His cradle with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love—  
 Albeit of a stern, unbending mind— 160  
 To have the Young-one in his sight, when he  
 Had work by his own door, or when he sat  
 With sheep before him on his shepherd's stool,  
 Beneath that large old oak which near their door  
 Stood, and from its enormous breadth of shade 165  
 Chosen for the shearer's covert from the sun,  
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called  
 The Clipping Tree, a name which yet it bears.  
 There, while they two were sitting in the shade  
 With others round them, earnest all and blithe, 170  
 Would Michael exercise his heart with looks  
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed  
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep  
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts  
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears. 175

And when, by Heaven's good grace, the boy grew up  
 A healthy lad, and carried in his cheek  
 Two steady roses that were five years old,

Then Michael from a winter coppice cut  
 With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped 180  
 With iron, making it throughout in all  
 Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,  
 And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipt  
 He as a watchman oftentimes was placed  
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ; 185  
 And, to his office prematurely called,  
 There stood the urchin, as you will divine,  
 Something between a hindrance and a help ;  
 And for this cause not always, I believe,  
 Receiving from his Father hire of praise ; 190  
 Though naught was left undone which staff, or voice,  
 Or looks, or threatening gestures could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand  
 Against the mountain blasts, and to the heights,  
 Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways, 195  
 He with his Father daily went, and they  
 Were as companions, why should I relate  
 That objects which the Shepherd loved before  
 Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there came  
 Feelings and emanations--things which were 200  
 Light to the sun and music to the wind ;  
 And that the old man's heart seemed born again !

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up :  
 And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,  
 He was his comfort and his daily hope. 205

While in this sort the simple household lived  
 From day to day, to Michael's ear there came  
 Distressful tidings. Long before the time  
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound  
 In surety for his brother's son, a man 210

MICHAEL.

Of an industrious life and ample means ;  
 But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
 Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now  
 Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture—  
 A grievous penalty, but little less . 215  
 Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim  
 At the first hearing, for a moment took  
 More hope out of his life than he supposed  
 That any old man ever could have lost.  
 As soon as he had gathered so much strength 220  
 That he could look his trouble in the face,  
 It seemed that his sole refuge was to sell  
 A portion of his patrimonial fields.  
 Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,  
 And his heart failed him. “ Isabel,” said he, 225  
 Two evenings after he had heard the news,  
 “ I have been toiling more than seventy years,  
 And in the open sunshine of God’s love  
 Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours  
 Should pass into a stranger’s hand, I think 230  
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.  
 Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself  
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;  
 And I have lived to be a fool at last  
 To my own family. An evil man 235  
 That was, and made an evil choice, if he  
 Were false to us ; and if he were not false,  
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like this  
 Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—but  
 ’Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus. 240  
 When I began, my purpose was to speak  
 Of remedies, and of a cheerful hope.  
 Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land  
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;

He shall possess it, free as is the wind 245  
 That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,  
 Another kinsman ; he will be our friend  
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
 Thriving in trade ; and Luke to him shall go,  
 And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift 250  
 He quickly will repair this loss, and then  
 May come again to us. If here he stay,  
 What can be done ? Where every one is poor,  
 What can be gained ?" At this the old man paused,  
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind 255  
 Was busy looking back into past times.  
 There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,  
 He was a parish-boy ; at the church-door  
 They made a gathering for him—shillings, pence,  
 And half-pennies—wherewith the neighbours bought  
 A basket, which they filled with peddler's wares ; 261  
 And, with this basket on his arm, the lad  
 Went up to London, found a master there,  
 Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy  
 To go and overlook his merchandise 265  
 Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,  
 And left estates and moneys to the poor,  
 And, at his birthplace, built a chapel floored  
 With marble, which he sent from foreign lands.  
 These thoughts, and many others of like sort 270  
 Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,  
 And her face brightened. The old man was glad,  
 And thus resumed : " Well, Isabel ! this scheme,  
 These two days, has been meat and drink to me.  
 Far more than we have lost is left us yet, 275  
 We have enough—I wish, indeed, that I  
 Were younger,—but this hope is a good hope.  
 —Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best

Buy for him more, and let us send him forth  
 To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night : 280  
 —If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night.”  
 Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth  
 With a light heart. The housewife for five days  
 Was restless morn and night, and all day long  
 Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare 285  
 Things needful for the journey of her son.  
 But Isabel was glad when Sunday came  
 To stop her in her work : for when she lay  
 By Michael's side, she through the two last nights  
 Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep ; 290  
 And when they rose at morning she could see  
 That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon  
 She said to Luke, while they two by themselves  
 Were sitting at the door, “Thou must not go :  
 We have no other child but thee to lose, 295  
 None to remember—do not go away ;  
 For if thou leave thy father, he will die.”  
 The Youth made answer with a jocund voice ;  
 And Isabel, when she had told her fears,  
 Recovered heart. That evening her best fare 300  
 Did she bring forth, and all together sat  
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work ;  
 And all the ensuing week the house appeared  
 As cheerful as a grove in spring : at length 305  
 The expected letter from their kinsman came,  
 With kind assurances that he would do  
 His utmost for the welfare of the Boy ;  
 To which requests were added that forthwith  
 He might be sent to him. Ten times or more 310  
 The letter was read over ; Isabel



Went forth to show it to the neighbours round ;  
 Nor was there at that time on English land  
 A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel  
 Had to her house returned, the old man said, 315  
 " He shall depart to-morrow." To this word  
 The housewife answered, talking much of things  
 Which, if at such short notice he should go,  
 Would surely be forgotten. But at length  
 She gave consent, and Michael was at ease. 320

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll  
 In that deep valley, Michael had designed  
 To build a sheepfold ; and, before he heard  
 The tidings of his melancholy loss,  
 For this same purpose he had gathered up 325  
 A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge  
 Lay thrown together, ready for the work.  
 With Luke that evening thitherward he walked ;  
 And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,  
 And thus the old man spake to him : " My son, 330  
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full heart  
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same  
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,  
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.  
 I will relate to thee some little part 335  
 Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good  
 When thou art from me, even if I should speak  
 Of things thou canst not know of. After thou  
 First camest into the world—as oft befalls  
 To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away 340  
 Two days, and blessings from thy father's tongue  
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,  
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.  
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds

Than when I heard thee by our own fireside 345  
 First uttering, without words, a natural tune ;  
 When thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy  
 Sing at thy mother's breast. Month followed month,  
 And in the open fields my life was passed  
 And on the mountains ; else I think that thou 350  
 Hadst been brought up upon thy father's knees.  
 But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,  
 As well thou knowest, in us the old and young  
 Have played together, nor with me didst thou  
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can know." 355  
 Luke had a manly heart ; but at these words  
 He sobbed aloud. The old man grasped his hand,  
 And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see  
 That these are things of which I need not speak.  
 —Even to the utmost I have been to thee 360  
 A kind and a good father. And herein  
 I but repay a gift which I myself  
 Received at others' hands ; for, though now old  
 Beyond the common life of man, I still  
 Remember them who loved me in my youth. 365  
 Both of them sleep together. Here they lived,  
 As all their forefathers had done, and when  
 At length their time was come, they were not loath  
 To give their bodies to the family mould.  
 I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived. 370  
 But 'tis a long time to look back, my son,  
 And see so little gain from threescore years.  
 These fields were burdened when they came to me,  
 Till I was forty years of age, not more  
 Than half of my inheritance was mine. 375  
 I toiled and toiled. God blessed me in my work,  
 And till these three weeks past the land was free.  
 —It looks as if it never could endure

Another master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,  
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good 380  
 That thou shouldst go." At this the old man paused.  
 Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,  
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :  
 "This was a work for us ; and now, my son,  
 It is a work for me. But lay one stone— 385  
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.  
 Nay, boy, be of good hope ; we both may live  
 To see a better day. At eighty-four  
 I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy part ;  
 I will do mine.—I will begin again 390  
 With many tasks that were resigned to thee.  
 Up to the heights and in among the storms  
 Will I without thee go again, and do  
 All works which I was wont to do alone  
 Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee, boy ! 395  
 Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast  
 With many hopes. It should be so—Yes—yes—  
 I knew that thou couldst never have a wish  
 To leave me, Luke ; thou hast been bound to me  
 Only by links of love. When thou art gone, 400  
 What will be left to us !—But I forget  
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone  
 As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,  
 When thou art gone away, should evil men  
 Be thy companions, think of me, my son, 405  
 And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,  
 And God will strengthen thee. Amid all fear  
 And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou  
 Mayst bear in mind the life thy fathers lived,  
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause 410  
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well—  
 When thou returnest, thou in this place wilt see

A work which is not here—a covenant  
 'Twill be between us. But whatever fate  
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last, 415  
 And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped down  
 And, as his father had requested, laid  
 The first stone of the sheepfold. At the sight  
 The old man's grief broke from him ; to his heart 420  
 He pressed his son, he kissèd him and wept ;  
 And to the house together they returned.  
 —Hushed was that house in peace, or seeming peace,  
 Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn the Boy  
 Began his journey ; and when he had reached 425  
 The public way, he put on a bold face ;  
 And all the neighbours, as he passed their doors,  
 Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,  
 That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their kinsman come, 430  
 Of Luke and his well-doing ; and the Boy  
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,  
 Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout  
 "The prettiest letters that were ever seen."  
 Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts. 435  
 So, many months passed on ; and once again  
 The Shepherd went about his daily work  
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now  
 Sometimes, when he could find a leisure hour,  
 He to that valley took his way, and there 440  
 Wrought at the sheepfold. Meantime Luke began  
 To slacken in his duty ; and, at length  
 He in the dissolute city gave himself

To evil courses : ignominy and shame  
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last 445  
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love ;  
 'Twill make a thing endurable which else  
 Would overset the brain or break the heart.  
 I have conversed with more than one who well 450  
 Remember the old man, and what he was  
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.  
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks  
 He went, and still looked up towards the sun, 455  
 And listened to the wind ; and, as before,  
 Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,  
 And for the land his small inheritance.  
 And to that hollow dell from time to time  
 Did he repair to build the fold of which 460  
 His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet  
 The pity which was then in every heart  
 For the old man ; and 'tis believed by all  
 That many and many a day he thither went  
 And never lifted up a single stone. 465

There, by the sheepfold, sometimes was he seen,  
 Sitting alone, with that his faithful dog,  
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.  
 The length of full seven years, from time to time,  
 He at the building of this sheepfold wrought, 470  
 And left the work unfinished when he died.  
 Three years, or little more, did Isabel  
 Survive her husband. At her death the estate  
 Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.  
 The cottage which was named The Evening Star 475  
 Is gone ; the ploughshare has been through the ground



On which it stood; great changes have been wrought  
In all the neighbourhood; yet the oak is left  
That grew beside their door; and the remains  
Of the unfinished sheepfold may be seen 480  
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

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## 4.—THE SOLITARY REAPER.

- Behold her, single in the field,  
 Yon solitary Highland Lass,  
 Reaping and singing by herself ;  
 Stop here, or gently pass !  
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5  
 And sings a melancholy strain ;  
 Oh, listen ! for the Vale profound  
 Is overflowing with the sound.
- No nightingale did ever chant  
 So sweetly to reposing bands 10  
 Of travellers in some shady haunt  
 Among Arabian sands :  
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
 In springtime from the cuckoo-bird,  
 Breaking the silence of the seas 15  
 Among the farthest Hebrides.
- Will no one tell me what she sings ?—  
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
 And battles long ago : 20  
 Or is it some more humble lay  
 Familiar matter of to-day ?  
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
 That has been, and may be again ?
- Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang 25  
 As if her song could have no ending ;  
 I saw her singing at her work,  
 And o'er the sickle bending ;  
 I listened till I had my fill ;  
 And when I mounted up the hill, 30  
 The music in my heart I bore  
 Long after it was heard no more.

## 5.—THE PREACHER.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,  
 And still where many a garden flower grows wild ;  
 There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,  
 The village preacher's modest mansion rose.  
 A man he was to all the country dear, 5  
 And passing rich with forty pounds a year ;  
 Remote from towns he ran his godly race,  
 Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place ;  
 Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,  
 By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour ; 10  
 Far other aims his heart had learnt to prize,  
 More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.  
 His house was known to all the vagrant train ;  
 He chid their wanderings but relieved their pain :  
 The long-remembered beggar was his guest, 15  
 Whose beard descending swept his aged breast ;  
 The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,  
 Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed ;  
 The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
 Sat by his fire, and talked the night away, 20  
 Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,  
 Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.  
 Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,  
 And quite forgot their vices in their woe ;  
 Careless their merits or their faults to scan, 25  
 His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,  
 And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side ;  
 But in his duty prompt at every call,  
 He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all ; 30  
 And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,  
 To tempt his new-fledged offspring to the skies,  
 He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,  
 Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid, 35  
 And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,  
 The reverend champion stood. At his control

Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul ;  
 Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,  
 And his last faltering accents whispered praise. 40

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,  
 His looks adorned the venerable place ;  
 Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,  
 And fools who came to scoff, remained to pray. 45  
 The service past, around the pious man,  
 With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran ;  
 E'en children followed with endearing wile  
 And plucked his gown to share the good man's smile.  
 His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed,  
 Their welfare pleased him and their cares distressed ; 50  
 To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,  
 But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.  
 As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,  
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,  
 Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread, 55  
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

—*Goldsmith (The Deserted Village).*

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6.—MATILDA AND REDMOND.

XI.

The tear down childhood's cheek that flows,  
 Is like the dewdrop on the rose ;  
 When next the summer breeze comes by,  
 And waves the bush, the flower is dry. 5  
 Won by their care the orphan child  
 Soon on his new protector smiled,  
 With dimpled cheek and eye so fair,  
 Through his thick curls of flaxen hair,  
 But blithest laugh'd that cheek and eye,  
 When Rokeby's little maid was nigh ; 10  
 'Twas his, with elder brother's pride,  
 Matilda's tottering steps to guide ;  
 His native lays in Irish tongue,  
 To soothe her infant ear he sung,

MATILDA AND REDMOND.

And primrose twined with daisy fair, 15  
 To form a chaplet for her hair.  
 By lawn, by grove, by brooklet's strand,  
 The children still were hand in hand,  
 And good Sir Richard smiling eyed  
 The early knot so kindly tied. 20

XII.

But summer months bring wilding shoot  
 From bud to bloom, from bloom to fruit ;  
 And years draw on our human span,  
 From child to boy, from boy to man ;  
 And soon in Rokeby's woods is seen, 25  
 A gallant boy in hunter's green.  
 He loves to wake the felon boar,  
 In his dark haunt on Greta's shore,  
 And loves, against the deer so dun,  
 To draw the shaft, or lift the gun, 30  
 Yet more he loves, in autumn prime,  
 The hazel's spreading boughs to climb,  
 And down its cluster'd stores to hail,  
 Where young Matilda holds her veil ;  
 And she, whose veil receives the shower, 35  
 Is alter'd too, and knows her power ;  
 Assumes a monitress's pride,  
 Her Redmond's dangerous sports to chide ;  
 Yet listens still to hear him tell  
 How the grim wild-boar fought and fell, 40  
 How at his fall the bugle rung,  
 Till rock and greenwood answer flung ;  
 Then blesses her, that man can find  
 A pastime of such savage kind !

XIII.

But Redmond knew to weave his tale 45  
 So well with praise of wood and dale,  
 And knew so well each point to trace,  
 Gives living interest to the chase,  
 And knew so well o'er all to throw  
 His spirit's wild romantic glow, 50



ELLEN DOUGLAS.

That, while she blamed, and while she fear'd,  
She loved each venturous tale she heard.  
Oft, too, when drifted snow and rain  
To bower and hall their steps restrain,  
Together they explored the page 55  
Of glowing bard or gifted sage :  
Oft, placed the evening fire beside,  
The minstrel art alternate tried,  
While gladsome harp and lively lay  
Bade winter night flit fast away ; 60  
Thus, from their childhood, blending still  
Their sport, their study, and their skill,  
An union of the soul they prove,  
But must not think that it was love.  
But though they dared not, envious Fame 65  
Soon dared to give that union name ;  
And when so often, side by side,  
From year to year the pair she eyed,  
She sometimes blamed the good old knight  
As dull of ear and dim of sight, 70  
Sometimes his purpose would declare,  
That young O'Neale should wed his heir.

—*Scott (Rokeby).*

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7.—ELLEN DOUGLAS.

XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,  
When lo ! forth starting at the sound,  
From underneath an aged oak,  
That slanted from the islet rock,  
A damsel guider of its way, 5  
A little skiff shot to the bay,  
That round the promontory steep  
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,  
Eddying in almost viewless wave,  
The weeping willow twig to lave, 10  
And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,  
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.  
The boat had touch'd this silver strand,

Just as the hunter left his stand,  
 And stood conceal'd amid the brake, 15  
 To view this Lady of the Lake.  
 The maiden paused, as if again  
 She thought to catch the distant strain.  
 With head upraised, and look intent,  
 And eye and ear attentive bent, 20  
 And locks flung back, and lips apart,  
 Like monument of Grecian art,  
 In listening mood, she seem'd to stand,  
 The guardian naiad of the strand.

XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace 25  
 A nymph, a naiad, or a grace,  
 Of finer form, or lovelier face !  
 What though the sun, with ardent frown,  
 Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—  
 The sportive toil, which, short and light, 30  
 Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,  
 Served too in hastier swell to show  
 Short glimpses of a breast of snow :  
 What though no rule of courtly grace  
 To measured mood had train'd her pace,— 35  
 A foot more light, a step more true,  
 Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew ;  
 E'en the slight harebell raised its head,  
 Elastic from her airy tread :  
 What though upon her speech there hung  
 The accents of the mountain tongue,— 40  
 Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,  
 The listener held his breath to hear !

XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seem'd the maid ;  
 Her satin snood, her silken plaid,  
 Her golden brooch, such birth betray'd. 45  
 And seldom was a snood amid  
 Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,  
 Whose glossy black to shame might bring  
 The plumage of the raven's wing ;  
 And seldom o'er a breast so fair, 50

Mantled a plaid with modest care,  
 And never brooch the folds combined  
 Above a heart more good and kind.  
 Her kindness and her worth to spy,  
 You need but gaze on Ellen's eye ; 55  
 Not Katrine, in her mirror blue  
 Gives back the shaggy banks more true,  
 Than every free-born glance confess'd  
 The guileless movements of her breast ;  
 Whether joy danced in her dark eye, 60  
 Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh,  
 Or filial love was glowing there,  
 Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,  
 Or tale of injury call'd forth  
 The indignant spirit of the North. 65  
 One only passion unreveal'd,  
 With maiden pride the maid conceal'd,  
 Yet not less purely felt the flame ;—  
 O need I tell that passion's name !

## XX.

Impatient of the silent horn, 70  
 Now on the gale her voice was borne ;—  
 "Father !" she cried ; the rocks around  
 Loved to prolong the gentle sound.  
 Awhile she paused, no answer came,—  
 "Malcolm, was thine the blast ?" the name 75  
 Less resolutely utter'd fell,  
 The echoes could not catch the swell.  
 "A stranger I," the Huntsman said,  
 Advancing from the hazel shade.  
 The maid, alarm'd, with hasty oar, 80  
 Push'd her light shallop from the shore,  
 And when a space was gain'd between,  
 Closer she drew her bosom's screen ;  
 (So forth the startled swan would swing,  
 So turn to prune his ruffled wing.) 85  
 Then safe, though flutter'd and amazed,  
 She paused, and on the stranger gazed.  
 Not his the form, nor his the eye,  
 That youthful maidens wont to fly.

—Scott (*Lady of the Lake*).



ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

Till she, like thee, all soiled is laid 35  
 Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,  
 On life's rough ocean luckless starred !  
 Unskilful he to note the card  
 Of prudent lore, 40  
 Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,  
 And overwhelm him o'er !

Such fate to suffering worth is given,  
 Who long with wants and woes has striven,  
 By human pride or cunning driven 45  
 To misery's brink,  
 Till, wrenched of every stay but Heaven,  
 He, ruined, sink !

Even thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,  
 That fate is thine—no distant date ; 50  
 Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,  
 Full on thy bloom ;  
 Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight  
 Shall be thy doom !

—Burns.

9.—ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk : 5  
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
 But being too happy in thy happiness,—  
 That thou, light-wingéd Dryad of the trees,  
 In some melodious plot  
 Of beechen-green, and shadows numberless,  
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease. 10

O, for a draught of vintage ! that hath been  
 Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvéd earth,  
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,  
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth !  
 O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15



ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

- Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim  
 And purple-stainéd mouth ;  
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim : 20
- Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;  
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs, 25  
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;  
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
 And leaden-eyed despairs ;  
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. 30
- Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,  
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :  
 Already with thee ! tender is the night, 35  
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,  
 Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays ;  
 But here there is no light  
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown  
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways. 40
- I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
 But, in embalméd darkness, guess each sweet  
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows  
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ; 45  
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;  
 Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves ;  
 And mid-May's eldest child  
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy-wine,  
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves. 50
- Darkling I listen ; and for many a time  
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,

## SONNET XCVIII.

Call'd him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,  
 To take into the air my quiet breath ;  
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55  
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
 In such an ecstasy !  
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
 To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !  
 No hungry generations tread thee down ;  
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown :  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path 65  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;  
 The same that oft-times hath  
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell  
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self !  
 Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.  
 Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades 75  
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
 Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep  
 In the next valley-glades :  
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?  
 Fled is that music :—do I wake or sleep? 80

—Keats.

## 10.—SONNET XCVIII.

From you have I been absent in the spring,  
 When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,  
 Hath put a spirit of youth in everything,  
 That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.  
 Yet nor the lays of birds nor the sweet smell 5  
 Of different flowers in odors or in hue,

TO A SKYLARK.

Could make me any summer's story tell,  
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew :  
Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,  
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose ; 10  
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,  
Drawn after you : you pattern of all those.  
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,  
As with your shadow I with these did play.

—*Shakespeare.*

---

11.—TO A SKYLARK.

Up with me ! up with me into the clouds !  
For thy song, Lark, is strong ;  
Up with me, up with me into the clouds !  
Singing, singing,  
With clouds and sky about thee ringing, 5  
Lift me, guide me till I find  
That spot which seems so to thy mind !

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,  
And to-day my heart is weary ;  
Had I now the wings of a Faery, 10  
Up to thee would I fly.  
There's madness about thee, and joy divine  
In that song of thine ;  
Lift me, guide me high and high  
To thy banqueting-place in the sky. 15

Joyous as morning,  
Thou art laughing and scorning ;  
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,  
And, though little troubled with sloth,  
Drunken Lark ! thou would'st be loth 20  
To be such a traveller as I.  
Happy, happy Liver,  
With a soul as strong as a mountain River  
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,  
Joy and jollity be with us both ! 25

TO THE MUSES.

Alas ! my journey, rugged and uneven,  
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind  
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,  
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,  
I, with my fate contented, will plod on, 30  
And hope for higher raptures, when Life's day is done.  
— *Wordsworth.*

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12.—CASTLE OF INDOLENCE—II, 3.

I care not, Fortune, what you me deny ;  
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace ;  
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,  
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face ;  
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace 5  
The woods and lawns, by living stream at eve ;  
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,  
And I their toys to the great children leave ;  
Of fancy, reason, virtue, naught can me bereave.  
— *Thompson.*

---

13.—TO THE MUSES.

Whether on Ida's shady brow,  
Or in the chambers of the East,  
The chambers of the sun, that now  
From ancient melody have ceased ;  
Whether in heaven ye wander fair, 5  
Or the green corners of the earth,  
Or the blue regions of the air,  
Where the melodious winds have birth ;  
Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,  
Beneath the bosom of the sea, 10  
Wandering in many a coral grove,—  
Fair nine, forsaking poetry ;  
How have you left the ancient love  
That bards of old enjoy'd in you !  
The languid strings do scarcely move, 15  
The sound is forced, the notes are few.  
— *W. Blake.*

ULTIMA THULE.

14.—DAYS.

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,  
Muffled and dumb, like barefoot dervishes,  
And marching single in an endless file,  
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.  
To each they offer gifts after his will, 5  
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.  
I, in my pleachéd garden, watched the pomp,  
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily  
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day  
Turned and departed silent. I, too late, 10  
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

—*Emerson.*

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15.—NIGHT.

I am he that walks with the tender and growing night ;  
I call to the earth and sea, half held by the night.

Press close bare-bosomed night ! Press close, magnetic nourishing  
night !

Night of south winds ! night of the large, few stars !

Still, nodding night ! mad, naked, summer night ! 5

Smile, O voluptuous, cool-breath'd earth !

Earth of the slumbering and liquid trees !

Earth of departed sunset ! earth of the mountains, misty topped !

Earth of the vitreous pour of the full moon, just tinged with blue !

Earth of shine and dark, mottling the tide of the river ! 10

Earth of the limpid grey of clouds, brighter and clearer for my  
sake !

Far-swooping, elbow'd earth ! rich apple-blossom'd earth !

Smile, for your lover comes !

—*Whitman.*

---

16.—ULTIMA THULE.

With favoring winds, o'er sunlit seas,  
We sailed for the Hesperides,  
The land where golden apples grow ;  
But that, ah ! that was long ago.





STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN.

18.—DEATH THE LEVELLER.

The glories of our blood and state  
Are shadows, not substantial things ;  
There is no armor against fate ;  
Death lays his icy hand on kings ;  
Sceptre and Crown 5  
Must tumble down,  
And in the dust be equal made  
With the poor crookéd scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,  
And plant fresh laurels where they kill ; 10  
But their strong nerves at last must yield,  
They tame but one another still.  
Early or late,  
They stoop to fate,  
And must give up their murmuring breath 15  
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow ;  
Then boast no more your mighty deeds ;  
Upon Death's purple altar now,  
See where the victor-victim bleeds ! 20  
Your heads must come  
To the cold tomb ;—  
Only the actions of the just  
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

—*Shirley.*

19.—STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN.

Strange fits of passion have I known ;  
And I will dare to tell,  
But in the lover's ear alone,  
What once to me befell.

When she I loved was strong and gay, 5  
And like a rose in June,  
I to her cottage bent my way  
Beneath the evening moon.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,  
All over the wide lea ;  
My horse trudged on, and we drew nigh 10  
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard plot ;  
And as we climbed the hill,  
Towards the roof of Lucy's cot  
The moon descended still. 15

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
Kind nature's gentlest boon !  
And all the while my eyes I kept  
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof 20  
He raised, and never stopped ;  
When down behind the cottage roof,  
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide  
Into a lover's head !— 25  
“ O, mercy ! ” to myself I cried,  
“ If Lucy should be dead ! ”

— *Wordsworth.*

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20.—SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS.

She dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the springs of Dove ;  
A maid whom there were none to praise,  
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone 5  
Half hidden from the eye !  
— Fair as a star when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be ; 10  
But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me !

— *Wordsworth.*

I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN.

21.—A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL.

A slumber did my spirit seal ;  
I had no human fears :  
She seem'd a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;  
She neither hears nor sees,  
Roll'd round in earth's diurnal course  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

5

— *Wordsworth.*

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22.—I TRAVELL'D AMONG UNKNOWN MEN.

I travell'd among unknown men  
In lands beyond the sea ;  
Nor, England ! did I know till then  
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !  
Nor will I quit thy shore  
A second time ; for still I seem  
To love thee more and more.

5

Among thy mountains did I feel  
The joy of my desire ;  
And she I cherish'd turn'd her wheel  
Beside an English fire.

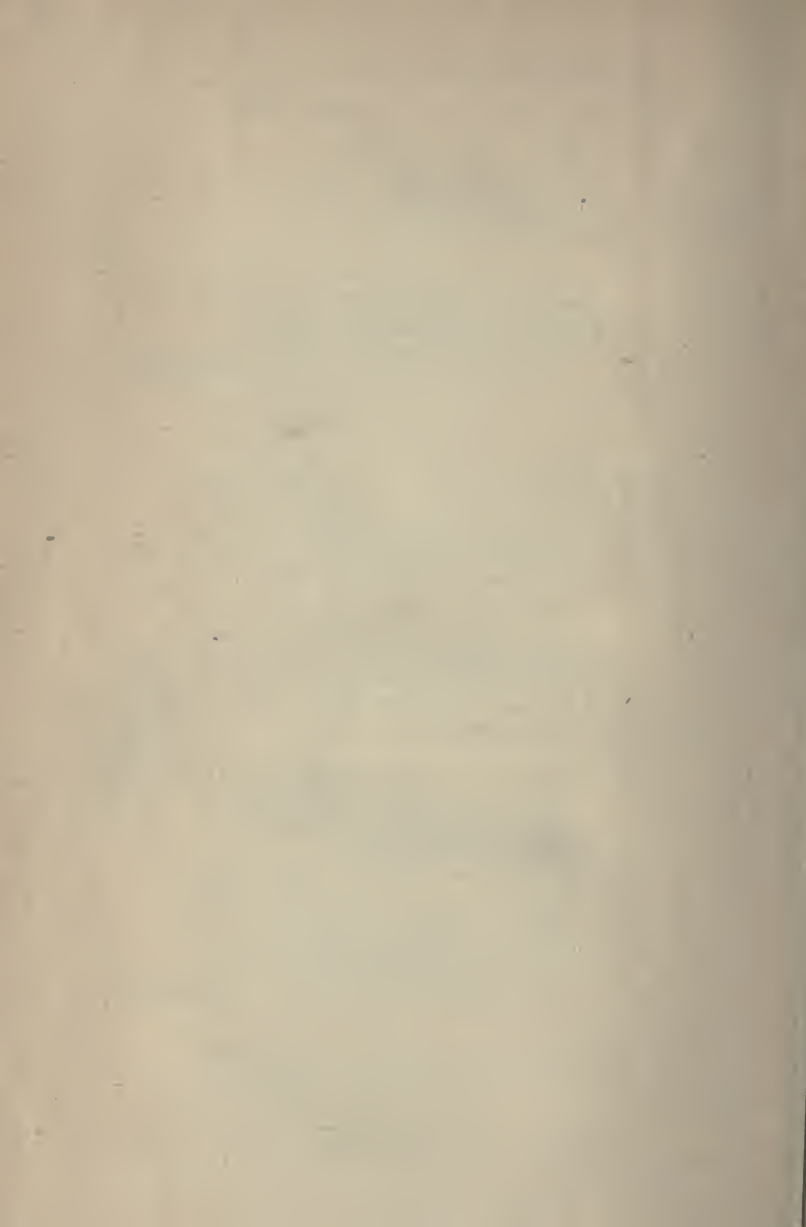
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Thy mornings show'd, thy nights conceal'd  
The bowers where Lucy play'd ;  
And thine too is the last green field  
That Lucy's eyes survey'd.

15

— *Wordsworth.*

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